

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR."—SHAKESPEARE.

ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

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MABEL'S PROGRESS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE."

BOOK I.

CHAPTER VII. A FAMILY DINNER AT BRAMLEY MANOR.

MRS. CHARLEWOOD was a member of the Reverend Decimus Fluke's congregation. So was Miss Augusta. The latter, indeed, was very much given to professions of piety of a somewhat melancholy and soul-depressing character. Miss Augusta, though a beauty and an heiress, eschewed the worldly amusements which might have appeared most calculated to tempt a young lady of her age and attractions. She went to balls occasionally, but she never waltzed. She sometimes attended the performance of an oratorio, but she seldom went to a secular concert. And as for the play!—Miss Augusta would not have entered the doors of a theatre on any pretext or persuasion whatsoever. Stay, I must record one exception to this rule. When the Misses Charlewood once passed a season in London, Augusta, radiant in a rich and elegant toilette, had been seen several times in a box at the Italian Opera. But then, it *was* the Italian Opera. And the élite of London society were there to be seen—and to see. And it cost a great deal of money. So Miss Augusta had been to the Italian Opera.

Her sister Penelope, independent in this matter as in most others, declined to attend the Reverend Mr. Fluke's church; but was in the habit of going to a chapel in the neighbourhood of Bramley Manor, where very high-church services were performed, with much elaboration, and where the sermon never exceeded fifteen minutes in length. The chapel was a bran-new construction, of a very florid style of architecture, with cast-iron crosses stuck on each of its many pinnacles, and bits of coloured glass inserted in all the windows. Penelope complained that Mr. Fluke's sermons made her bilious. "Sitting still to be bullied three times every Sunday disagrees with my constitution," said she. "When there's any bullying going, I like to do my share of it," she added, frankly.

However, though the seven Misses Fluke groaned in concert over the Puseyism—in their mouths the word was almost synonymous with

perdition—of the eldest Miss Charlewood, they were very willing to go to Bramley Manor whenever they had a chance of doing so. And the Charlewood family were, to use Mr. Fluke's own phrase, "some of the brightest jewels in his congregation." Thus, it came to pass, that from the Misses Fluke the Charlewoods heard of Mabel's visit to Corda Trescott. Clement had learned the fact from Corda herself, but had said nothing about it, feeling possibly some little pique at Mabel's disregard of his advice, and feeling also, in a half unconscious way, very reluctant to canvas the subject at home. But his sisters were not so reticent.

One evening, when the whole family was assembled round the dinner-table, and after the servants had left the room, Augusta opened fire after this fashion :

"What a queer girl Mabel Earnshaw is!"

Her father looked up from his walnuts. He was a very handsome old man; it was from him that Augusta inherited her beauty. He was dressed in a somewhat peculiar fashion, his attire being, in fact, a close imitation of the costume of a well-known nobleman in the neighbouring county, to whom he bore a strong resemblance. Mr. Charlewood had occasionally been mistaken for this nobleman by strangers; and had once been addressed by a fellow-traveller in a railway carriage as "my lord"—a circumstance which, strange to say, afforded him very great gratification.

"Queer? Mabel Earnshaw queer?" said he, addressing his daughter Augusta. "Well; hers is a very pleasant kind of queerness, at all events. I thought she was your dearest friend."

"Oh," exclaimed Walter, a good-looking, light-haired lad, who was giving himself mighty airs of connoisseurship over his port wine, "don't you know, sir, that Miss Earnshaw has been thanked and dismissed the service? Jane Fluke is promoted to the post of dearest friend, vice Mabel Earnshaw, superseded."

"I'm sorry, dear Watty," retorted Augusta, with placid sweetness, "that Jane Fluke is not pretty. For I know you can't be expected to like her merely because she's good."

Walter laughed, and held his peace.

"Well, but what is Mabel's special queerness?" asked Mr. Charlewood.

"Oh, I don't know, papa," replied Augusta; "but she is queer. I think she's—she's strong minded."

"Gussy," remonstrated Mrs. Charlewood, looking quite shocked, "don't, my dear. You shouldn't say such things of people, my love."

"Never mind, mamma," said Penelope, "thank Heaven, nobody can say of us that we're strong minded. That's a great blessing. But if papa really wants to know what particular oddity Mabel has been guilty of, I think I can tell him what Augusta means. You know the little girl that Jackson managed to drive over on the last day of the festival, papa? We told you all about it. Well; Mabel Earnshaw has taken a craze about the child, and has been to see her."

"Nothing very queer in that; is there?" asked Mr. Charlewood, dipping a walnut into his wine.

"Oh, but the child belongs to such dreadful people," replied Augusta, "and lives in such a low neighbourhood. New Bridge-street, papa!"

"Oh," said Mr. Charlewood, shortly. He had reminiscences of still lower neighbourhoods than New Bridge-street, but he kept them to himself.

"The Flukes told us about it, my dear," said Mrs. Charlewood to her husband. "Mabel has joined them in district visiting for a time, whilst Eliza is ill. But Miss Fluke says she fears—she greatly fears—that Mabel isn't yet got real conversion. Well, we can but 'ope and pray for her. Miss Fluke says she's only joined to have an opportunity of visiting this little girl."

"Miss Fluke is the most intolerable fool," said Clement, breaking silence for the first time, and angrily pushing his plate away from him; "and I wonder at Miss Earnshaw having anything to do with her."

"Dear old Fluke!" cried Walter, with a mischievous glance at his sister Augusta. "I think she's charming. Here's her health, with three times three. By jingo, she's a clipper, is Miss Fluke!"

"Really, Watty," observed Augusta, with dignity, "you take more of that old port than is good for you, my dear boy."

"As to being a fool, Clem," said Penelope, rising to follow Mrs. Charlewood out of the room, and speaking into Clement's ear, as he held the door open for his mother and sisters to pass, "Miss Fluke is a fool, of course. But you can't expect her to be as devoted to Mabel Earnshaw's beaux yeux as some people are."

"Pshaw!" ejaculated Clement, shutting the door sharply after the ladies, and walking back to his place.

"What was that Penny said?" asked Mr. Charlewood.

"Only nonsense, sir," rejoined Clement, shortly.

"Penny don't often talk nonsense, either," replied his father.

"How modest you are, Clem!" said Walter. "I declare you're positively blushing! 'Pon my soul you are! I couldn't do that to save my life." Walter contemplated his smooth young face in the bowl of a dessert-spoon with much self-satisfaction.

"Where are you off to, Watty?" asked Mr. Charlewood, as his youngest son lounged towards the door.

"I'm going down to Plumtree's, sir," replied the lad, after an instant's hesitation.

"To Plumtree's? Don't overdo Plumtree's, Watty. I don't like so much billiards. When I was your age, I didn't know one end of a cue from the other."

"All right, sir!"

"No, I don't know that it is all right, sir," returned his father, irritated by Walter's nonchalant tone. "You get through a precious sight of money, as it is, young gentleman, without helping it off by billiards. Do you ever consider what an expense you've been to me? And what a still greater expense you will be if I buy you a commission, as you are always plaguing me to do?"

"I suppose you can afford it, sir," said Walter, sulkily. His manly dignity was giving place to a very naughty-boy air, as he stood with his hand on the fastening of the door, turning it backwards and forwards with a clicking noise.

"I don't suppose so, though. Giving you money is like pouring water into a sieve. I won't have you hanging about Plumtree's. So that's flat."

"It's very hard," muttered Walter, almost whimpering, "to be kept in like a schoolboy. They'll think me a blessed muff, when I'd promised particularly to go there to-night, to see the match between Lord Higsworth's son and Tiffin of the Carabiners. There's a whole lot of fellows going from the barracks."

"Lord Higsworth's son?" said Mr. Charlewood.

"Yes, young Skidley," said Walter, eagerly pursuing his advantage, as he saw his father's face soften. "And there'll be Captain De Vaux, and Fitzmaurice, and Plowden, and no end of tip-top fellows."

"If you promised, Walter," said Mr. Charlewood, with a moral air, "of course, you are bound to go. I didn't know you had given your word. The Honourable Arthur Skidley, you said?"

"Yes, sir. He and I are as thick as thieves. He's no end of a brick."

"He may be no end of a brick, but he is not even the beginning of a gentleman," said Clement.

Next moment the fragrance of a cigar was blown across the hall, as the boy opened the house door, and set off gaily down the avenue.

"Surprising what high friends Watty makes!" said Mr. Charlewood, when he and his elder son were alone together.

"I don't like Watty's getting into that set, sir," said Clement. "He is a mere boy, and his head is always turned by his newest acquaintances."

"Men of family, Clem," said his father, moving uneasily in his chair. "Men of family, and—and—fashion."

"There are blackguards to be found in all

classes, unfortunately; and, I assure you, that Arthur Skidley is looked upon very coolly by the best men in his own rank."

"I didn't think you had so much class prejudice, Clem."

"I hope I have no class prejudice, father. But I know that Skidley and his associates are no more to be accepted as specimens of English gentlemen, than drunken Dicky Dawson, the mason, is to be taken as a fair type of an English artisan."

Mr. Charlewood emptied his glass in silence, and then rose and walked to the fire, where he stood with his back against the chimney-piece. The autumn evenings were beginning to get chilly, and there was a touch of frost in the air, which made the fire blaze briskly.

"Well, Clem," said he, with a sharp glance that recalled his daughter Penelope's glittering eyes and shrewd expression: "since we seem to be in the lecturing line to-night, let me say that I hope and suppose it is all nonsense what Penny said about you and little Earnshaw."

"Oh, you did hear it then, sir?"

"Why, I heard something. Penny used some French word or other, but I believe I made out the meaning."

"Well, sir?" said Clement, rising also, and standing opposite to his father on the hearth-rug.

"Well, that's all, Clement. I hope and suppose it is all nonsense."

"I don't quite understand why you should hope it, father; but I can truly say that I never thought of Miss Earnshaw in that way. She is almost a child compared to me. The idea is absurd. At the same time, I beg you to understand that I am not binding myself in the least degree to any prescribed course of conduct in the matter."

"Of course, of course, Clem. I'm not meaning to dictate to you, my boy."

"I cannot understand what objection you could have to Miss Earnshaw, supposing—but it's altogether preposterous. Chattering girl's folly of my sister's."

"No objection in the world to Mabel Earnshaw—as Mabel Earnshaw, Clem. She's a nice bright well-behaved little girl, and as good as gold. But it isn't the sort of connexion I dream of for you, my boy. Money is not to be despised, but I waive money—we are not beggars. What I hope," said Mr. Charlewood, pausing with his hand on the door; "what I hope you'll look for, is family, Clem. You know my history. I have raised myself a good many degrees in the world, and I should like to set my son after me, a few rounds higher on the ladder." With those words, Mr. Charlewood walked out of the dining-room without giving Clement an opportunity to reply.

The young man threw himself into a large arm-chair by the fire, and shading his eyes with his hand, fell into a deep meditation until the servant came to ask if he would go up-stairs to take coffee, or whether it should be brought to him in the dining-room?

"I'll go up to the ladies," said Clement,

rousing himself with a start. "I've nearly sat the fire out here." Then when the man had left the room again, he passed his hand over his forehead, with a half laugh, "Tut," he muttered, "what a fool I am! It's preposterous, and out of the question. Confound all silly chattering tongues! By Jove, if such a thing were to happen, they might thank themselves for it. I swear it never entered my head before. But it's altogether absurd. Quite absurd." And Clement walked up-stairs, humming an air with somewhat defiant cheerfulness.

CHAPTER VIII. DOOLEY AT TEA.

MABEL had no opportunity for some time of repeating her visit to little Corda; for Mr. Saxelby fell ill, and was obliged to remain at home. Enforced idleness is irksome to most men, but to Mr. Saxelby it was positive torment. And it was by no means a pleasant time for those on whom the duty of nursing him devolved. Mr. Saxelby could scarcely endure to lose sight of his wife for an instant. If she quitted his room he would ask where she was, and why she did not return, eight or ten times in the course of as many minutes. And he would take neither food nor medicine except from her hands.

On Mabel, therefore, fell the government of the house, and the care of her little brother. This last was no tax on her patience or good will, for she loved the little fellow dearly. The child was a fair pretty boy of nearly four years old. Somewhat delicate and frail in body, but with an active intelligence that was ever eager to learn. He looked upon "sister Tibby"—so he called her—as an inexhaustible encyclopædia of information. He was christened Julian, but had translated that appellation in his baby fashion into "Dooley," by which name he was habitually called at home.

Mabel was sitting at tea one evening with the child (having sent up a tray to the sick-room), when some one rang the house-bell, and after a few minutes the door of the sitting-room was gently opened, and a figure stood on the threshold. It was already dusk, though not late, and the fire-light did not suffice to show the visitor's face distinctly.

"Who is it?" asked Mabel. But almost as she spoke she recognised Clement Charlewood, and rose to greet him. "I are having tea," observed Dooley, for the benefit of all whom it might concern, "b'own tea."

"Good evening, Miss Earnshaw. Our people sent yesterday to ask for Mr. Saxelby; and as I was coming into the neighbourhood of Fitz-Henry-road, I said I would call myself and inquire." This was true in the letter, but not in the spirit; since it was to no member of his family that Clement had announced his intention of visiting Jessamine Cottage, but only to the servant charged with making the daily inquiries. "I'm going myself, James," he said, briefly. And James, though glad enough to be relieved of his duty, had doubtless canvassed his young master's decision in the servants' hall with judicial impartiality.

"It's very good of you. Papa is better." It was characteristic of Mabel that she invariably called Mr. Saxelby "papa" as soon as he was ill and suffering.

"I," repeated Dooley, with increased emphasis, "are having tea. B'own tea."

"Why, that's famous, Dooley," said Clement, with his hand on the child's flaxen curls.

"What's dat?" asked Dooley, pausing in the act of conveying a spoonful of the pale cinnamom-coloured liquid into his mouth, and thereby inundating his pinafore.

"What's famous? Capital, first-rate, very good. You know what that means?"

Dooley nodded. "Tibby's firs' yate," said he, clutching his spoon after the fashion of a dagger, and thoughtfully rubbing his forehead with the bowl of it.

"Don't do that, darling," urged the subject of his panegyric. "I am so much obliged to you for coming, Mr. Charlewood. I believe papa will be quite well in a day or two."

"And Mrs. Saxelby?"

"She is a little worn, but it is nothing. I would send to tell her you are here, but papa can't bear her out of his sight. And I have just sent her a cup of tea into his room."

"B'owner tea dan mine," announced Dooley, in an explanatory manner. "But dis ain't white, is it?"

"No indeed; quite brown."

"Sometimes my tea is white," said Dooley, as though impelled by a sense of candour to state the whole case, though it was evidently a sore point with him.

"Pray, Miss Earnshaw," said Clement, "don't think of disturbing your mother. I have not many minutes to stay."

"He can 'top till I go to bed, Tibby, can't he?" said Dooley. Mabel laughed frankly, and took the child on her knee. The maid had come to remove the tea-things, and had brought with her a lamp whose light was shed full on the brother and sister. Clement thought within himself that they made a charming picture. Mabel in a neatly fitting grey dress, whose subdued tone brought out the girlish freshness of her face, and the yellow curls of the child nestling against his sister's dark shining hair.

"I understand," said Clement, with the least possible touch of stiffness in his manner, "that you have been to see Corda Trescott."

"Yes," replied Mabel, quietly; "I told you I should go, if possible."

"You went with Miss Fluke, did you not?"

"No; not exactly. Miss Fluke and Louisa called for me at Mr. Trescott's. But I could not have gone without their aid, certainly."

"Miss Fook," murmured Dooley, sleepily, jerking his leg backwards and forwards; "Miss Fook's ugly."

"Hush, Dooley. You must go to bed."

"Oo're pitty," said Dooley, critically. "So's mamma, so's papa."

"And what do you think of little Corda, Miss Earnshaw?"

"I think her the most engaging little creature

I have ever seen. So sensitive and gentle, and yet so full of vivacity. I want you very much to do me a favour, Mr. Charlewood."

"If I can," said Clement. He had not quite got over Mabel's cool disregard of his advice. And yet he liked her none the less for it. Somewhat the more, perhaps. But he gave her no account of his feeling.

"It is this. Little Corda is fond of reading; and I have some children's books that were given to me long ago. I should like so much to lend her some of them. Would you mind—I know you are in the neighbourhood sometimes—leaving them with her for me?"

"I will do so with pleasure. But let me, at the risk of offending you, say once more that I do not think you are acting wisely in mixing yourself up personally with these people."

"Surely Miss Fluke is a tower of strength, Mr. Charlewood?"

"Miss Fook is a towow," observed Dooley, with drooping eyelids.

"Dear child, you *must* go to bed," said his sister, kissing him.

"I may 'top till he goes?" urged Dooley, waving a very diminutive thumb, which was not at all under command, in an endeavour to point at Clement Charlewood.

"Well, one little minute, then. I really can't see, Mr. Charlewood, why you, who seem to have a liking for, and appreciation of, Corda, should be so urgent against my going to see her."

"Miss Earnshaw, if I may venture to say so, I have also a liking for, and appreciation of, you."

Mabel looked straight at him with clear eyes in which there was no trace of affectation or embarrassment. "Thank you," she said, smiling very slightly. "Well?"

"Well, believe me it is not good for you to seek these people. If it were only the little girl, poor baby, I should say no word against it. Even her father, weak and shiftless as I take him to be, might not be utterly objectionable. But there is a brother——"

"Yes, but I have never seen him. Stay! Is he not singularly handsome, with the air of a foreigner? Ah, yes; I met him coming into the house as I left it. I should never be likely to come into contact with him."

"God forbid! I am not speaking at hazard, Miss Earnshaw, when I assure you that that young man is a thoroughly worthless fellow. I might be justified in using a stronger word. Watty, who I am sorry and ashamed to say has got into a set I very much disapprove of, has lately met young Trescott at billiard-rooms, and in much lower haunts. He is a thorough-paced young vagabond. Keen and cunning as an old experienced gambler. Vain and boastful as a boy."

He continued to speak of Walter and of the Trescots, feeling it very sweet to have the warm ready sympathy and quick intelligence with which Mabel received his confidence. In the midst of his talk, Mrs. Saxelby came in. She

was pale and worn, and bore the look of one who has been blanching in a close dark room, away from free light and air.

"How is Mr. Saxelby?" asked Clement.

"He has fallen into a doze, and I have come down for a little change. I believe he is better. There is no serious evil. But you lords of the creation are terribly bad patients. I think he might have been well, a week ago, if he had not increased his fever and irritation by fretting. Why is this dear boy not in bed? Dooley, you are fast asleep, my pet."

"I ain't s'leepy, mamma," said Dooley, struggling into a sitting posture, with his hair all over his eyes, and one cheek flushed a deep burning red, from his having pressed it against his sister's shoulder. Mrs. Saxelby rang the bell for the maid. "Go with Sarah, my boy. It is bedtime."

"Ain't *he* doin'?" asked Dooley, making one desperate effort to stand on his legs, and sliding down against his sister's dress on to the hearth-rug.

"Yes, Dooley, I am going too," said Clement. Dooley looked down at him doubtfully from the elevation of Sarah's arms.

"Is he doin', Tibby?" Dooley asked, with evident confidence in the truth of the reply he should get from his sister.

"I think he is, Dooley. But even if he doesn't go, you must. Because he's a grown up man, you know, and you're only a tiny boy."

"Dood night," said Dooley, resignedly. The view of the subject that Mabel had presented to him was one with which he was not prepared to deal in his drowsy condition.

"I must not stay after that," said Clement, when the child had been carried away.

"I will go and get the books I spoke of," murmured Mabel, gliding quietly out of the room. Her mother threw herself into an easy-chair with an air of weariness. She was tired in body and harassed in mind by the monotonous attendance in the sick-room; and Clement's presence was a welcome change.

"Miss Earnshaw has become a disciple of Miss Fluke's, I understand," said Clement.

"Not altogether a disciple," answered Mrs. Saxelby, "but she has consented to assist him in district visiting, for a time. I don't mind telling *you* frankly that I do not like it. Mabel is not adapted for that kind of thing. She is the best, the most unselfish, the dearest child in the world. Helpful and unweary in serving those she loves. But she is not quite—what shall I say?—not quite amenable."

"Not quite amenable to Miss Fluke, that is," said Clement, smiling.

"Exactly. You see, poor dear Miss Fluke, though actuated by the most charming motives, and—and—evangelical things of all sorts," said Mrs. Saxelby, breaking down somewhat in her eulogium, "is not clever. In a worldly sense, Miss Fluke is *not* clever. Now Mabel is clever. You know that it is not mere mother's partiality which makes me say so, Mr. Charle-

wood, but Mabel has really remarkable talent and intellect for her age."

"I know it," said Clement. But though he did not speak insincerely, it may be doubted whether he had ever looked upon Mabel in the light of a very intellectual person before. Many of our latent judgments, which might otherwise have lain dormant as the spark lies in the flint, are thus elicited by sudden contact with another mind.

"I have been taking the liberty, Mrs. Saxelby," pursued Clement, "of again speaking to your daughter about those Trescotts. You will think me very audacious to return to the charge, after the severe snubbing I got from Miss Earnshaw on the subject the other day."

"Not at all audacious. Very friendly, on the contrary. But, entre nous, Mr. Charlewood, I don't see any such very strong objection to her seeing the child occasionally, under the auspices of Miss Fluke. Mabel's sympathies were strongly excited by the circumstances under which she first saw this little girl. As the child grows stronger, and does not call for her pity, Mabel's enthusiasm will cool. Though," added Mrs. Saxelby, after an instant's pause, "Mabel is not apt to be fickle; I must own that."

"Mrs. Saxelby, I have been telling Miss Earnshaw something of which you will better appreciate the weight and bearing than she can. The brother, of whom I have chanced to hear a good deal lately, is a worthless young vagabond. I suppose most people of his class and profession are dissipated and careless. But this lad is worse than that. He is a frequenter of billiard-rooms and taverns. The Trescotts are very poor. The money with which he gratifies his self-indulgence must be got in, to say the least, a disreputable way, by gambling. It is a bad case. Think, Mrs. Saxelby, of the possibility of Miss Earnshaw's name being bandied about in low public-houses by this young fellow and his associates." Clement's hand clenched itself involuntarily as he spoke.

"I will talk to Mabel myself," said Mrs. Saxelby, nervously; "she will hear reason. Hush, she's coming. Say no more at present, I beg of you."

Mabel came into the room with a little packet of books under her arm. "Mr. Charlewood has promised to take these to Corda Trescott for me, mamma."

"He is very kind."

"There is the White Cat, with illustrations, coloured in a very high style of art by myself. Poor white cat! The common paint with which I bedaubed her, has grown discoloured and made her into a brown cat by this time. Never mind; there is the story. Then I have Robinson Crusoe, Edgeworth's Rosamond, and a volume of Hans Christian Andersen's tales. It is quite a library for Corda."

"Good night, Mrs. Saxelby," said Clement, taking charge of the books. "Good night, Miss Earnshaw. I hope Mr. Saxelby will be

quite well and at work again in a day or two. He is not fond of idleness, I know."

Then Clement took his leave and went away. He looked up at the starlight autumn sky as he walked along the suburban road, with its trim hedges on either hand, and all sorts of unpractical and vague fancies danced through his brain.

If another Asmodeus, instead of lifting the house-tops and showing the scenes that are being enacted within, could unroof the mysterious dome wherein our thoughts and imaginations are busy, and could make palpable to the senses their goings and comings—the unlikely guests lodged in one brain, and the unsuspected vacuity of another, the odd corners full of romance and fantasy in some minds that pass for mere unvarying machines, and the hard practical calculation of intellects which an admiring world supposes to be "of imagination all compact"—could such a familiar demon be found, I believe we should witness a far more strange and wonderful spectacle than any of those which greeted the astonished eyes of the Spanish student.

SHORTENED COMMONS.

It is a horribly vulgar cause to plead. Against us, are clergymen, noblemen, aldermen, poor-law guardians, and other great people by the score. We are said to be radically vicious and bad. We take strong drink when we can get it, and we crave for it when we can't. We are disreputable in appearance, and dissolute in habits, and are experts in wife-beating, Sabbath-breaking, and profane swearing. Our presence is distasteful to respectability, and our junketings are a scandal and a sin. No genteel neighbourhood can suffer under our incursions, and at the same time preserve its purity of tone; and it is in the interests of law and order, no less than for the maintenance of the rights of property, that we are fenced out, warned off, and got rid of. Pretty villas and neat cottages, tasteful gardens and trim roads, are rapidly springing up where we have had the wicked audacity to let our children romp and play; and the gentle philanthropist who is at once pastor of his flock and lord of the manor, will tell you how much better and holier his parish is, now that it is exorcised of such wretches as ourselves, and how he will, under the circumstances, and as a matter of Christian duty, sell you an eligible lot of forest-land, just enclosed, at a ridiculously low sum per acre.

We are Spitalfields weavers, Bethnal-green match-box makers, Whitechapel costermongers, dock labourers, bird-fanciers, hawkers, hucksters, and petty shopkeepers. Our houses are eminent for filth and dirt. We are often without water to wash in, and oftener without time or inclination to use it if we had. We turn on to the well-known open space (we'll call it Cribbing Common) on a Sunday, because its outskirts are within easy walk-

ing distance—say, two or three miles—of the crowded parts where we live, and when we do so we've no more notion of looking virtuous, or of formally exercising our rights, than the ladies and gentlemen you may see lounging about Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens on a Sunday afternoon. It's easy enough to make out a case against us, and I dare say that neither in language, habits, nor demeanour, do we reach the standard of Christian perfection which it is that reverend gentleman's duty to hold up, and which he and his friends and neighbours have of course attained. It's beautifully appropriate to find out that we're such atrocious characters; because it elevates the removal of ancient landmarks, and the appropriation of public land, into a service rendered to the State. It's true, I've heard of Sunday school treats, and of friendly society gatherings being held here, and the carts you see full of family people all decently dressed, the humble little pic-nics, where father and mother and two or three children make up the party, and the orderly quiet young couples softly whispering to each other the tale which never grows old, don't look particularly profigate; but our reverend friend knows better, bless you, and could tell you strange stories of the vices these seemingly harmless pleasure-takers hypocritically conceal. The alderman there takes rather a different view, and generously admits that "It is nice for greengrocers and charity children and such-like to have a nice open place like this common to take a blow on. I don't deny it. But it isn't nice for me. I don't want 'em to come, for they're rather a nuisance in front of my house. I'd rather they went somewhere else, so don't expect me—who've only got my place on a lease—to take an active part against encroachment, for I won't."

Villas and gardens and snug investments; land calmly appropriated and sold at an almost nominal price—the purchaser taking all risks—this is the history of the rapidly disappearing Cribbing Common.

We are at an East-end suburb this bright Sunday morning, and I propose to drive you round and about the common for thirty miles or so, that you may see for yourselves the wholesale manner in which the land belonging to the public is being filched away. Over this fine open space to the right, past the gipsies' carts, and beyond that clump of trees, you can just see the City of Babylon Cemetery. This was established about a dozen years ago, and the cost of laying it out was defrayed, I'm told, out of the corporate funds. This was just as wrong in principle, mind you, as any private enclosure; but as burying in the crowded city was undoubtedly bad, this proceeding was considered, by comparison, good. There have been plenty of keen-eyed self-seekers to take advantage of the precedent. Now that we've passed the little hut where the common gate hung until twelve months ago, we can't turn or look without seeing evidence of enclosure. Ask the woman in the cottage when and why the gate was

abolished. "Was very old, and broke off its hinges about twelve months ago, and there ain't to be a gate no more!" is her answer, and one more evidence of boundary and proof of the separate existence of the forest is swept away. Here's a small enclosure belonging to a gentleman whom I've often had the pleasure of hearing speak. A poor-law guardian of a large East-end parish, a fervent advocate of Magna Charta; I've known him quite eloquent upon the superiority of this free country to imperial France: the culminating point of such superiority being a local elective system capable of producing his enlightened self. This patch of ground came to him, they say, through a relative who paid something to the lord, and then took it. As a matter of course, there's no title; and our guardian being a shrewd business man in everything relating to his own interests, doesn't build the snug little country box he'd promised himself, just yet. Every year his right of ownership is undisputed, will strengthen his claim, until long usage and custom will create what he thinks is sufficient title, and then I suppose he'll build. It's the same story everywhere. That fine farm you see down yonder was taken years ago. There was some fuss, and an action was brought at the assizes; but just before the trial came on, a compromise was effected, and undisturbed possession allowed. It's not difficult, they say, to induce men to give way on points they've no direct interest in upholding. There are no fences, you'll remark, in the field opposite, and there's a sort of superstition in these parts (how originated it's impossible to say) that if an enclosure is under four feet high, it is not so flagrant a violation of the law as if it were over four feet high.

"Is Mr. Take at home, my man?" "No, sir, he's left here, and I've got the farm." "Bought it of him?" "No, I rent it of him, *it's his freehold*, you know, and I pay him so much a year." "How came it to be his freehold?" "Why, he bought it of the lord, to be sure; I thought everybody knew that." Mark the phrase, "his freehold," as if it were thought expedient to drag the precise nature of the assumed ownership forward at every opportunity; and then look at that monster brick-field just made on the left. The contractor for a great public undertaking is the man responsible for this; and having, I suppose, quietly arranged terms with the lord of the manor, has proceeded to enclose, and then dig holes, and make bricks. A very short time ago, neither those ugly yawning chasms now filled with water, nor the clay mounds and dirt heaps, existed. All was green smooth turf; and the fifty or sixty acres thus appropriated, were played on and marched over without let or hindrance, like the remainder of the space near. Now we come to what is called "The Groves;" and here you see the enclosure system in its first stage. Rough low railings, over which any one can climb; gates to preserve the right of way; men, women, and children, roaming to and fro as now. But twelve months ago that little Swiss cottage, now fenced

off, was a regular place of resort for hot water for tea-making; and the beautifully wild ground before you was dotted with merry groups every fine holiday. Yet, we repeat, you are now only a few miles from the very worst parts of Babylon; there is neither railway nor omnibus fare to pay for the majority of the poor frequenters, who just trudge here from their homes and back again. Of course, they'll be allowed their old privileges for this summer. It would not do to brave popular indignation all at once. So the railings will stand quietly for a time, as an advanced guard, and then the regular army of cottages, villas, and mansions will follow in their wake. Up the lane, and turning the corner by the old entrance to Warlock Park, where a handsome residence stands on one side, and another is rapidly approaching completion on the other, we come upon a huge black board with "Stoley Park Estate. Building lots to be let or sold. For terms, apply to Messrs. Bone."

All common-land a few months since. All the property of the disreputable people who enjoy fresh air and sunshine upon Sundays. It does not seem a difficult mode of acquiring valuable estates! Some stout palings and a big board, and the thing's done. "Of course my lord won't charge you anything like the true value of the land, Mr. Builder. You know all about the little hitch respecting title; and if you're willing to take the risk and invest your money, you won't find us hard as to the terms upon which you can have a good long building lease. Scruples? Pooh! look at the Pawnerton Park estate a little further on. A new road made there, sir; great benefit to the community. New houses on each side, let as soon as built; plan of the estate, and building lots in the regular way. Genteel little colony of the higher class of tradesmen, professional people, and government clerks, is planted there; and yet it was all forest-land, such as this is, a few months back. Enclosed by consent of the Homage, there's the fun of it, each member of the Homage getting a bit, and the lord, of course, taking the lion's share. Legal? It's quite legal enough for our purpose; for we've been letting off the land like smoke, until that meddlesome COMMONS PRESERVATION SOCIETY began to interfere, and succeeded in frightening some people concerning their want of title. At Pawnerton Park, builders have been bold enough to put up houses; and at Stoley Park they've held back; that's the only difference. The mode of action is simplicity itself. A London lawyer or two, and a few others personally interested, have met together by appointment, keeping the room door open to maintain the show of legal form. A man has been hired to say mildly, "Oh yes! oh yes!" in the old Saxon style, before the masquerading business began; and then every necessary respect and attention having been paid to the commoners and the public, the little party has set to work with map and compasses, and declared

the land its own. Highly satisfactory, of course, to the men dividing the spoil; and as it requires more of public spirit and length of purse than falls to the lot of most of us, to try the question at law, the land-takers grow bold with impunity, and the fine old forest is eaten up year after year with a greedy rapidity which grows by what it feeds on.

Side by side, with land on which the wild trees and tangled undergrowth are flourishing in much the same condition as when our forefathers hunted the wild boar here, and stained their bodies with woad, are vulgar little cockney boxes, with fine names and tawdry formal railled-in gardens, reminding one of Twopenny Town, N.W. The very road you're driving on, and which is a convenient cut enough from the railway station to the highway, is filched from the common. Over by the village on the hill yonder, and through the trees on the rising ground to the left, was a fine open plot, known as the Green. A railing is put round it now, and I suppose we should be warned off as trespassers, if we ventured upon its cool soft turf. But the most wholesale spoliation of all is at the village to which I'm taking you next. There's no such tavern-sign now as the one you're looking for, but the old inn is here under another name, with front bulging over the pathway, overhanging stories, drowsy little diamond-paned lattices, quaint gable-ends, zig-zag chimneys, cozy little bar, sunken uneven floors, and queer out-of-the-way corners, just as when its famous landlord gazed wisely at the boiler's burnished side for inspiration. The old oak-panelled room where Queen Elizabeth is said to have slept, now bears the mysterious word "Lodge" on a metal plate, and has a black knocker on its door; within it are certain throne-like chairs, swathed in clean white linen, and with straight stiff backs reaching to the low ceiling, which, with other symbols in the room, tell graphic stories to the initiated of wardens and worshipfuls, together with ancient and solemn rites, masonic "firings," and secretary's toasts. A great place for dinners now, they tell us; parochial authorities, courts, and societies from Babylon often choosing the queer rambling old place for meeting in. But we must not linger for bit or sup now. Cloudland is to be seen yet. Cloudland, where the kind clergyman is lord of the manor, who says all Sunday visitors are so wicked and vile; and where justices of the peace send the commoners to prison who decline to sell their rights. There are few prettier spots in the country, and the forest is at its perfection here.

The rich undulating fields we pass; the fine old English lanes where the trees on each side bend forward to overhang and intertwine like stout friends who've tried and love each other, are all full of quiet and home-like beauty. Cloudland itself you may see dotted in straggling fashion along yon hill-side; and it can, besides the clergyman I've spoken of, boast of a few wealthy residents, who, by industry, enterprise, and thrift, have risen

from low rungs in the commercial ladder, to be Nimrods of the Wessex hunting-fields, and justices of the peace. Their new positions, mark you, are not unimportant to the points we're discussing; for they're now thrown in with the landed interest, and are not very likely to raise an impious hand against what those demigods, "the county families," decree. It's a flattering thing to be consulted by people whom you're perhaps ready to grovel before as your social superiors; and when these welcome you as one of themselves, make flattering appeals to your well-known interest in the county, and ask you to accept a fine plot of land at a nominal price, it would be a positive slur upon your business capacity if you were to show the cold shoulder, or give a churlish nay. This is my way of accounting for what I'm going to relate; but then I'm only a poor Sunday visitor, you see, without as much land of my own as a lark could perch on, and it's quite possible I'm wrong. But that the choicest parts of the common have been recently surrounded by these stout posts and rails; that the clergyman lord of the manor has modestly taken several hundred acres of the best forest-land as his private share; that the new J.P.s have accepted smaller plots, and bought other plots from the lord at prices per acre which bear the same proportion to their real value as the sum given by a White-chapel "fence" for the watches his clients have irregularly "conveyed" do to their legitimate cost; that the gentlemen who co-operate with Mr. Shaw Lefevre, M.P., at the Commons Preservation Society, have a suit pending against the enclosure in the Court of Chancery—concerning these plain facts there can be no doubt whatever. A resident cottager is the man on whose behalf the action against the lord of the manor has been brought, and as his story is rather curious, I'll tell it you. When it was determined to ignore the ancient privileges of the public generally, and to assume that the handful of Cloudland residents were alone to be considered, it was almost "ask and have" amongst them.

There never was such liberality as when the common was cut up and divided. Even the mere tenant of a farm got a slice; and as for any one owning a freehold cottage or a bit of ground, he almost made his own terms. The landlord of the inn, and one or two other astute spirits, haven't taken their bits yet, but it's thoroughly understood that they're ready to do so, and that the longer they hold off in a friendly way the handsomer will be their reward. But, in the midst of all this charming unanimity, one obstinate family stood out. Mere labourers, with neither stake in the county, nor position in the world; these men, father and son, showed a sturdy, stubborn front when blandly spoken to of compromise. "Didn't want no truck with it. Had gone free on the common ever since he could remember; and would rather lop his wood as before, and go on free, than have a bit o' ground to call his own, which

he'd no real right to. Was obliged to the gentlemen all the same, but couldn't have no truck with it because somehow it didn't seem right." Such was the peasant's simple profession of faith. It was but natural that the lord of the manor and the bran-new county gentry should be indignant. It was short-sighted policy, though, to persecute their poor neighbour so openly; and when he was deprived of his means of livelihood, and his sons imprisoned for exercising the very right of lopping wood which they had refused to forego, their worships, the justices, made a distinctly false move. Worse and worse, too, were their later tactics. Two members of parliament having gone carefully into the facts, consented to act as trustees to a fund to be got up for the labourer's benefit. This was naturally unpalatable to the enclosing lord and his friend, so the Cloudland J.P., who lives in the white house to the right here, and who professes to own that fine plot of forest-land across the road to the left by virtue of having paid a small sum to the lord for it, what does this particularly disinterested gentleman do but write a letter to one of the trustees, to whom he was an entire stranger, denouncing the labourer as a profligate ne'er-do-well, whom it was a scandal to encourage.

There never was such a bad fellow as this labourer, according to the J.P. His children didn't go to Sunday-school; he himself didn't practise any of the virtues proper to his station; never went to church, or obeyed his superiors; and it was his own fault he was out of work. The fact of his having naughtily opposed the confiscation of ancient rights by his betters was discreetly avoided; and when the trustee replied that he thought differently to the J.P., and was determined to stick by the poor friendless fellow he'd taken up, be sure there was pretty consternation at Cloudland. Another letter, saying the first was "only prompted by an Englishman's love of justice and fair play"—a justice's fair play! stabbing in the dark!—and must be considered private; a retort from the trustee saying there could be no privacy when one stranger addressed another concerning an act of public duty; the publication of the whole correspondence; scandal, uneasiness, and incrimination followed. Meanwhile a great legal potentate is considering the peasant's claims, and the railings stand. It is scarcely likely that the ground will be tampered with further for the present; but, as you see, a large road has been made, and everything is prepared for permanent confiscation. Now you'll understand why we, the people in the habit of coming down here, are such dreadfully bad characters in the clergyman's eyes. We've no rights, bless you! The land is his freehold, just as Hampstead Heath is Sir Thomas Wilson's; and as for the protesting peasant and the rest of us, we ought to have our ears nailed to doors, as we should have, if we were living in the fine old times when justices were justices, and feudalism was respected. You

must know that the right of lopping wood on this common was granted to the poor inhabitants of Cloudland by Queen Elizabeth, and though there's been many a sly attempt to cajole them out of it by monks and others, they've remained firm to this day.

From here back again to our starting-place is one long scene of intermittent but increasing confiscation. As we approach Babylon, the villas and gardens become thicker and thicker, until the road is lined with handsome residences, each of which stands upon ground which was open common an incredibly short time ago, and for which the owners can show no more title than the good will of the lord of the manor. There's a local society started which has invited a large public meeting on the common; and all I'd ask of you, gentlemen, is to help us to understand what our rights really are. We know that in oiden times the lord of the manor lived in his district, and was, or ought to be, the protector of the poor people near. Now, under the specious pretence of improvement, he seems to seize upon land which, from its contiguity to our crowded capital, is of priceless value, and the wild luxuriance of which no money could replace; and he seems to secure his wealthy neighbours' sanction by a judicious bestowal of portions of the property he has seized. It's a profitable and comfortable arrangement enough from one point of view; but I'd like to know for certain whether it's right.

OLD STORIES RE-TOLD.

THE BURNING OF WILDGOOSE LODGE (COUNTY LOUTH).

ABOUT nine o'clock on a wild October night, 1816 (the year after Waterloo), a lonely little chapel at Stonetown, in the county Louth, many long miles from Dundalk, is filled by a mysterious party of about forty men, wrapped in the rough heavy-caped frieze great-coats of the ordinary Irish peasant, and armed with rude guns, horse-pistols, bludgeons, old gun-barrels set in pistol-stocks, and pitchforks. The men look savage, pale, and worn; many of them have ridden from great distances—from outlying villages in Meath, Cavan, and Monaghan. There are farmers and fishermen from the coast, blacksmiths, artisans, and farming lads, men of all ages and classes; their brows are knit, their mouths are compressed by the sense of a horrible secret about which they mutter under breath. They have met for no midnight mass. They are bent on no pilgrimage to Croagh Patrick, or the entrance of Purgatory, on the island in Lough Derg. No priest is on his way to exhibit the host to these perturbed men. The sacred bell will not tinkle that night within the roadside chapel, nor the crucifix be raised above their heads by a robed minister of God. They have not the air of men who come to kneel or who wish to unburden their souls before the holy altar. They are not bent on work to further which either the Virgin, the saints, or the

angels can be invoked. They are looking at the hammers and triggers of pistols; they are loading guns; they are fixing and sharpening bayonets with hideous smiles of cruel meaning. They are cursing the boys of Drumbride and Ennisheen for being late, and cheering the gossoons of King's Court and Ballynavorneen for being early, though they had to come through the bogs on foot.

It is not difficult to sketch the place of the Ribbonmen's meeting—a plain whitewashed little chapel, with a strip of green before the door, and inside the railings a large iron cross, with the emblems of the Passion attached to it by a crown of thorns. The interior of the dimly lit building is plain and poor, a timber roof, whitened walls, with here and there a staring coloured picture of the Virgin or St. Patrick, or a list of services or pilgrimages, a few rough chairs and benches, at the east end a deal platform, upon which the priest paces up and down while he delivers his sermon. On this platform stands the altar with the receptacle for the host—a plated sort of watch-case surrounded by metal rays. There are a few horn-books and dog-eared primers, and there is a cane lying in the window; for Stonetown being a poor place, the school is held in the chapel, and all day the parish clerk and schoolmaster, Pat Devan, has been beating into the barefooted, quick, ragged peasant children scraps of dog Latin, dreary sections of the multiplication-table, and fragments of Irish grammar. Those black sods lying in a heap by the low smouldering fire of red-hot peat are the fees that each boy brings daily to pay for his rough schooling. The chapel is hot, reeking, and close, for it has not been opened since the classes left.

Mr. Devan is held by the country people, the peat-cutters and ploughmen of Stonetown and Reagstown, to be a prodigy of learning. The only wonder is, that he never went to carry off all the prizes at Maynooth, or to astonish the learned Jesuits at St. Omer. He can read the breviary in Latin, and can repeat the prayers for the dead almost as well as Father Murphy. He knows the Hours by heart, and can recite long poems in Irish. He can hardly ask you how you are, or how the wife and chilfer are, without bringing in the Latin. No one prostrates himself lower or with more solemnity when the bell rings and the host is elevated; no one in Louth has gone more pilgrimages, or performed more stations. No one can tell you more about the Holy Father, and the great ceremonies at Rome; and whisht! he is one of us; he is in all the secret societies. It is in this chapel the Ribbonmen meet and discuss their plans of attacking houses for arms, to be ready for the next rising. He denounces traitors and spies. He knows when Meath is ready, when Monaghan is up, when Cavan is troubled, when Louth has got something on its mind. As he is the clerk of the parish as well as schoolmaster, he keeps the key of the chapel, so that no one but those who ought to know it, need know of the meetings of the Whiteboys or the United Irishmen. The halo

of the priesthood surrounds him also; he is at once respected and feared. The village priest, a worthy, portly, easy man, may or may not wink at these political meetings. At all events, he is not here to-night, but is no doubt by his own cozy fire, warming his toes and reading one of the Fathers near a table on which pleasantly steams a reasonable quiet glass of whisky-punch; or he is thinking of his pleasant college days, as he watches the last bit of peat burn clear and blue in the frugal little grate.

It is indeed a violent troubled night for a rendezvous; one of those nights when the fir-trees writhe and struggle with the wind, the oaks rock angrily, and the elms lash the air in a restless despair. The wind is tearing off the dead leaves by sheaves at a time. Dead leaves dry and crackle down every lane. Clouds of yellow leaves break out of sudden corners, and fill the air for a moment, before they scatter in utter discomfiture over the loose stone walls and the lonely miles of mountain, moor, and bog. The wind has demoniacal outbursts of anger that relapse into shrewish cries at keyholes, fretful rattlings at shutters and doors, hollow moans and shuddering vibrations down chimneys. If ever the devils wander in the darkness prompting hopeless men to despair, urging bad men to murder and to cruelty, and rejoicing at the growth and progress of wickedness wherever planning or accomplishing, this is the night that should bring them on such ghastly journeys, such is the storm that should shroud and cover them in their exulting search, leaving behind, a wake of wreck, death, and destruction.

Devan goes round to the men in the chapel, the fresh-coloured striplings and the old scarred wicked-looking rascals who fought in 'Ninety-eight, and gives them the sign and countersign of the night. There is not much said above a whisper, but the gestures, at which they laugh hideously, seem to typify gibbets with men hanging, and prayers offered up for such men. Then, Devan takes a peat from the fire, blows sparks from the lighted end, and waves it over his head. There is a suppressed shout and a wave of guns and pitchforks, as some one produces a bottle of whisky and an egg-shell; the fiery liquor is passed round, till the eyes of the conspirators begin to glitter, and a cruel alacrity inspires the tired men, whom Devan now selects and divides into two bands. Then, carrying the lighted turf, Devan leads them into the road in rough military order, and carefully locks the chapel door behind him. They march from that chapel by the Mill of Louth almost silently. Are they merely going to drill, or are they going to attack some farmer's house? Many do not yet know; all that many know is that they have been called from the forge and the plough, the fishing-boat and the shibbeen, on some secret errand of the Ribbonmen committee, and that they dared not refuse to come. But Devan, and McCabe, Marron, and M'Elarney, *they* know, for they are the leaders, and every one will soon know. Through the ranks from time to time spread the words,

"Remember, boys, who hung Tierney, Coulan, and Shanley; we must show no mercy to them who showed none." Then there rolls along a ground-swell of deep curses and execrations in Irish, as Devan waves the turf torch, that glows scarlet in the wind.

In the mean time, other bands are converging to the same spot. A party of men, with guns, pistols, and loaded sticks, have come from the cross-roads of Correcklick, where others have joined them; again, at the cross-roads of Ballynavorreen, others have come riding up smiling and shouting; at the cross-roads of Dumbride there have also been recruits; and even at Churchtown there was one armed man waiting. At Churchtown, the men on foot, knowing the country every "shap" and dyke, leap away to Reaghstown Chapel, the near way across the fields, but the horsemen (many riding double) ride to Reaghstown by the road to Tullykeel.

There are near upon a hundred now; savage-looking fellows, many of them with bad foreheads, high cheek-bones, and coarse cruel mouths, ready for any crime. They are near the place of action; at Arthurstown Chapel more whisky is produced; they madden themselves with drink; for there is work to do, and there may be fighting, if the dragoons come down on them. The fierce fellow who leads the Reaghstown detachment boasts that he has a party that can be relied on, and he goes to Campbell, who brought up the men from Dumbride, and, flourishing a pistol, swears that if any of either party flinch he will blow their brains out.

Beyond Reaghstown Chapel the country gets very wild, and there is one narrow swampy lane which horses can hardly traverse. There is one small farm-house on a piece of rising land; at this season almost surrounded by water, it is only approachable (except in a boat) by the narrow pass leading from the south side of Reaghstown Chapel lane. The bog is a wild mournful desolate place, much like any other of the five million acres of bog that give a mournful monotonous character to Irish scenery; wide tussocky tracks, untouched since the Deluge, great thorny lumps of furze, tangled nets of bramble, giant hillocks of rush, tufts of coarse dead grass, acres of heather; deep trenches are cut in the madder-coloured peat earth for drainage, from which the snipe darts and zig-zags when you approach; little black peat-stacks; these form the only landmarks to break the melancholy level, or here and there a little heap of coarse reedy grass; everywhere, by the dark chocolate slices dug but yesterday, or the dustier and more friable sections of the older workings, the wild cotton scatters its delusive little tufts of snowy filament, with which the wild duck will line its random nest. In the prairies, in the virgin forests, in the jungle, among the icebergs, between the glaciers, there is nothing so desolate and repulsive as an Irish bog, though beneath it lies the inexhaustible wealth of a soil whose riches have been accumulating since the Flood, and which needs only the magic touch of

Hope and Industry to spring and blossom into plenty.

Such spots, colonised by needy, energetic, and venturesome men, are dreary enough, even under a bright sun and pure sky; but in autumn, on a howling restless night, they are perfectly purgatorial in their dismal and deserted barrenness; they seem the end of the world, and outside all civilisation. Such may have been the aspect of the earth when the dragon lizards, those disbelievers in progress, dominated alone, and trampled as conquerors over their muddy dominion.

In the lane leading to this bog stood a labourer's house.

A man named Pat Halfpenny and his wife live there. They are sitting by the fire talking over the events of the day, and listening to the wind that, swelling and raging, then wearing down to a tired lull, seems all at once to give birth to strange sounds like the voices of advancing men and the trampling and splash of horses' feet. The wife clings to her husband; they tremble; for the fear of death is upon them, and their hearts beat so loud that they can hear the beating almost as clearly as that of the clock which ticks on the wall. A moment after, there comes an imperative tap at the door—the knock of men who will force their way in if they are not instantly admitted. Two stern men, one of them with a gun, enter, the moment the door is tremblingly opened; without speaking, they go up to the hearth; taking a little pot, they put three or four red-hot peats in it, and are about to go off with them. The poor woman falls on her knees, clasps her hands, and prays them not to take the fire away at such an hour. She does not know what it is for, but she suspects some horrible revenge. The men push her away angrily. The one with the gun says to Halfpenny:

"If we hear a word from you or your wife, we'll drag you out; if you dare to look after us, you spalpeen, I'll blow the shot in this gun through you."

They then leave a sentry at the door, and go on towards Lynch's, another house further on. Halfpenny, listening in intense fear, presently hears a clamour of talking, shouting, and mustering, and then the tramp of horses.

When the sound has gone by, and Halfpenny thinks all is safe, and opens his door to go and call his neighbour, Carroll, he hears a fierce voice in the darkness that tells him to shut the door or he will be shot.

There is no disguise now about the Ribbon-men's intention. They are going to attack a lone house, called Wildgoose Lodge, inhabited by a farmer named Edward Lynch, who at the last Louth summer assizes prosecuted the three Ribbonmen, Tierney, Coulan, and Shanley, for breaking into his house to obtain arms. The resistance had been desperate. The prisoners were unmistakably identified, and were convicted and executed at Dundalk, to the open horror and indignation of the Ribbon societies. Lynch's son-in-law, Thomas Rooney, and a labouring

boy, named James Rispin, were the chief witnesses.

In that lone house on the bog, they are busy at work, or sitting singing and laughing round the fire, while supper is preparing: Lynch and his wife, his brave son-in-law James Rispin, another labourer, Elizabeth Richards a servant, and another woman, and a child.

Devan and Malone, the captains of the two bands, have spread their men, according to order, to the right and left round the hill on which the doomed house is; they are closing in upon their victims, with guns and pistols ready. The lighted peat, roused by the wind and waving to and fro, breaks into a blaze, and is a moving signal for the circle of Ribbonmen. Their cruel object is to prevent any of the hated Lynches from running down to the water and escaping in the darkness by swimming and wading to land, or hiding in the heather clumps on the bog. Gologly and other men, left in the lane to hold the horses, laugh and dance as they see the circle formed. M'Elarney has refused to help hold the horses, saying he is as fit to go to the burning as any man there.

The sound of voices has by this time aroused the Lynch family. They look out, they see the moving light and hear the threatening sounds that can only mean mischief. They guess in an instant that the Ribbonmen are on them, to revenge their three dead comrades. Rooney snatches down his gun and prepares for defence. Some rush and bolt the hall door. The assailants make a charge at it with their gun-butts and strong shoulders. A voice from within cries:

"The first that comes in or out, I'll shoot him!"

Devan answers hoarsely through the darkness, the fire glaring on his face, so that it even more than usually resembles an evil spirit's:

"Don't think it is old times with you, Rooney; this night is your doom."

There is no more said, but several shots flash from the windows, and a man named Keeran is burned in the face by the powder of one discharge. The Ribbonmen fall back, and do not again attempt to force an entrance by blowing open the lock or hewing their way. Devan and Malone then cry out to fire the house at the back. With a savage eagerness the wretches run to the hay-yard, and collect great heaps of dry flax, unthrashed oats, and straw. The two men who fetched fire from Halfpenny's—determined men, and one of them a robber by profession—are ordered to light a bundle of flax and thrust it into the thatch of the roof. There is a crackling, a glare, a blaze, that shows at once the ring of red howling faces, and makes the bayonets and gun-barrels gleam crimson. Devan cries:

"We will show the country boys that there shall be no informers allowed in it."

The fire spreads over the roof with dreadful rapidity, flashing from end to end, with a crackling roar and fierce volumes of reddened smoke. In a moment a sheet of water, which almost insulates the house, seems turned into

a sea of blood, the windows glitter in the blaze, and the glass snaps and falls. Through the horrible glare, the ring of rejoicing wretches must seem to the unhappy creatures within like a circle of exulting devils.

Nothing but God's voice from heaven or the avenging hands of Angels can save the Lynches now. Devan's party know it, and dance and toss up their brimless hats, and wave their guns and pitchforks, with the ferocity of cannibals. The poor women, too, and the children, what have they done? What do they know of prosecutions and Ribbonmen conspiracies—they who were defended so bravely by Lynch and Rooney when they fought for their lives against the midnight thieves? Perhaps, even now, tearing themselves from the groaning women and screaming children, Lynch, Rooney, Rispin, and his fellow-servant, may load their guns to the muzzle, sharpen some knives for their belts, and, throwing open the door, turn mad and rush down on these murderers. If they fail to break through the circle, they may at least kill some, and die bravely.

But there is no time for this; the farmer has his wife in his arms, Rooney has his little child crying for help, the farm-servants have their sweethearts clinging to them, and praying hysterically for mercy—clinging with the agony and despair of drowning creatures. The burning timbers of the roof and the masses of blazing thatch fall on them, and set their clothes on fire, the house glows like a furnace, the fire starts in at the windows, the walls are growing red hot, the beds and chairs and floors are breaking out into flames. The men and women fly past the windows, from this corner to that, like terrified animals in a burning forest; their cries pierce and rend the air.

The only answer their murderers give, is a shout: "Let none survive; not one must live to tell of it!" And they pile more straw on the roof. The sky over the lonesome swamp gets redder—redder, and men far away at Andee and Enniskeen see it and know what is being done.

Bryan Lemmon, one of Devan's gang, springs forward with a ponderous sledge-hammer, and toiling like a Titan, drives in and shatters the hall door with a dozen crushing blows. The bayonets and guns move nearer; will Devan's men rush into this furnace, and slay all they meet? No, their hatred is now too intense and fiendish for such a shortening of their sport. A dozen of them bring armfuls of flax and oat straw, and push them blazing into the rooms. The hay-yard furnishes the funeral pile for its unhappy owner. So do the stables, where the horses kick and plunge, maddened by the heat and noise and glare.

The women and children fly from room to room, up-stairs and down. They crouch, they hide, they pray, they scream, and their screams are heard far beyond the flame, far into the darkness, scaring the heron and the fox. The wretched Lynch's well-known form is seen crossing a window, and Devan gives orders to fire at him. He cannot resist that order, though

it rather shortens the boys' fun. They fire, but he does not fall. A more terrible death awaits him. Lynch is seen no more. The lad Rispin, younger and more passionately eager for life, clammers on to a side-wall, from which the roof is now burnt away, and supplicates for mercy. Mercy! Ask a shark for mercy when he turns to snap, or a wolf after a second bite at the lamb. The answer is a dozen clashing bayonets in his side and back; and he topples, screaming, headlong into the seething caldron of flame.

Bursts of fire and smoke from the windows; one thrilling scream, a shrill shriek from a child; then a deep and terrible silence. The house glows like a red-hot crucible. Look in at the windows and you see only a raging volume of flame. At last the red rafters of the roof fall in, crashing and snapping, a storm of sparks glitters before the wind, a gust of flame rises up, then a tall pillar of illuminated smoke. The fire abates, and settles down over the eight poor murdered people. Devan and his men discharge their guns in noisy joy, the circle of one hundred monsters toss their hats, huzza, and cry:

"Lynch, we wish you luck of your hot bed."

Malone and another man say, as they go:

"All is well now, if we only had Mr. Filgate" (the Louth magistrate, who tried the three Ribbonmen whom poor Lynch had convicted).

It has been a glorious night's work for the Ribbonmen. When they leave the house—an hour ago so cheerful, now a charred vault—Campbell shouts to Gologly and the others, who have been holding the horses in the boggy part of the lane:

"We burned the little ones as well as the big ones, and left no one to tell the story; Begor! Lynch and Rooney won't go and inform against us again."

This very Gologly to whom he thus spoke betrayed Campbell, and brought him to the gallows.

Early in the morning, after this dreadful event, a man named Owen Reilly, whose cabin is about four miles from Lynch's house, hears voices in the road, and, being alarmed, barricades his door. A body of armed men at that hour can mean no good. There is a loud and angry rapping, but he is still unwilling to open, till the voices insist on it, assuring him that no harm is meant to anybody in that house. They merely want something to eat and drink. Reilly opens the door, and sees some savage-looking smoke-blackened men, who call for oaten bread and a bowl of milk. They are sullen, tired, and one of them has a black scorched wound on his face. That is Keeran, whom Lynch had wounded.

Next day the ruin of poor Lynch's house is visited by half the country-side. Mr. Filgate rides over and inspects with horror the four blackened walls, and the charred and ghastly remains of the eight murdered people. The peasants stand silently round, in secret sorrow or secret approval. The sunshine falls on the white ashes of the roof, the broken door, and

the trampled garden strewn with half-burned straw.

The crowd opens and part, when an old woman, bowed with grief, and tossing her arms like a keener at an Irish funeral, comes to look at the black mummies that, so short a time ago, were human beings. She recognises two of them—her son, whose shoulder, with a birth-mark on it, is still unconsumed; and Biddy Richards, one of the maid-servants. The rest she cannot guess at, they are so dreadfully burned. Poor Rooney is found sitting beside his wife, with the blackened body of his fine little boy, only five months old, sheltered between his knees. The sledge-hammer lies on the grass near the door, and the garden is littered with straw and flax.

There are too many people in this horrible conspiracy for the whole to remain long undiscovered. Devan is at once seized. It is noticed that a neighbour named M'Cabe is not among the people who flock to see the ruins of Lynch's house. A labourer, named Greenan, who goes to Liswinny to tell Mr. Filgate, the magistrate, of the event, is told M'Cabe is lame, and confined to the house with a "touch me not," or boil on the knee. But Alice Rispin sees him, two days after the fire, vaulting over a ditch, and in perfect health, and soon after an informer deposes to his having been at the fire.

Approvers soon come in, tempted by the reward of fifteen hundred pounds—not very reputable men—generally thieves or outlaws—but still clear and consistent in their stories, all witnesses of the crime, all active sharers in its accomplishment. The first, Bernard M'Iroy, was once a soldier in the Meath militia. He informs to Mr. Filgate. He had been forced into the business by Devan, and had not dared to refuse to help burn Wildgoose Lodge. A second approver, Peter Gologly, who was in jail for a murder, held the horses in the lane, saw the blaze, heard the shots fired, and the huzzing. Michael Kernan, a third approver, will confess afterwards that he knows nothing, except on hearsay from M'Iroy, who told him they should share some seven thousand pounds' reward. Thomas Gubby, another approver, is a thief; Patrick Murphy, the last approver, is under sentence to be hanged at Trim as a thief and murderer when he comes forward as a witness against the men by this time seized and thrown into prison.

These wretches were tried before the Honourable Justice Fletcher at the Louth Lent assizes, held in Dundalk on the 5th, 6th, and 7th of March, 1817, for the burning of Edward Lynch and his whole family of eight persons.

Sergeant Joy, in opening the case with much force and eloquence, "deplored the wretched state of depravity into which the lower orders of people in this country seemed to have fallen. No sooner did an honest individual seek redress of injuries from the impartial laws of his country, than an infernal conspiracy was entered into for his ruin. The unfortunate Lynch had evinced his courage and honesty in the prosecution of

these ruffians, and was therefore devoted to destruction. A conspiracy was immediately entered into to deprive him of his life. Villains from the north, from the south, from the east, and from the west; from the counties of Monaghan, Louth, Cavan, and Meath; all combined in a diabolical conspiracy to assassinate the man who had dared to appeal to the laws of his country for protection and redress. It was a remark worthy of attention, that religious parties had nothing to do with this most horrible transaction. The murderers and the murdered were of the same religion—all Catholics. It was founded solely upon an utter abhorrence of all law, of all distributive and impartial justice." After giving a résumé of the evidence of the approvers, the serjeant said: "But soon the devouring flames became general, the cries and lamentation were heard no more, silence ensued—it was the silence of death. The assassins now thought and boasted to one another that all was safe, that they were secure from all future punishment. Vain delusion! Idle boast! There was an eye that saw them, and the hour of their punishment was at hand. How could they think to escape the view of the God who fills all space! But they were seen by their fellow-mortals. The very fire which they had lighted for their infernal purpose had spread so strong a glare on their countenances, marked as they were with the character of crime, that they were fully displayed; and all who beheld them received such forcible impressions as nothing can deface. The wretches themselves, having glutted their revenge, closed the scene with malignant huzzas!"

The three first prisoners, McCabe, Keeran (the man with the black wound), and Campbell, were first found guilty. They received the sentence of death with a savage and sullen obduracy.

Next day, Craven, Marron, Gainer, Malone, Lenman, and Butler were also found guilty, and sentenced to death: the judge ordering their bodies to be delivered over to the surgeons for dissection. On the verdict being passed, the murderers broke out into a clamorous protest of adjurations and curses. Their hard and cruel faces showed with how little remorse they would have thrown the judge and jury into flames. They would scarcely be pacified or induced to listen to the judge's address, in which he twice broke down, overcome by the poignancy of his feelings. Before the sentence of death was finished, Malone seized a Testament which lay near him, and swore in the name of God and the Virgin that he was innocent. The erier snatching it from his hand, he broke into shouts and curses against the judge, the jury, and the police. He was removed still pouring forth those black, bitter, semi-Oriental imprecations with which the Irish language abounds.

The next day, three other prisoners were also found guilty. During his cross-examination, Murphy, the approver, confessed that, as a Ribbonman, he was sworn to obey his brethren to the utmost of his power, and that if ever again at liberty he would do the same under similar circumstances.

In summing up, Judge Fletcher said:

"The crime with which the prisoners stood charged was perhaps the most enormous which had ever come before him in his judicial capacity. How it was proved it was for them to decide. He knew (he said) that they would fully discharge their duty." Then, addressing himself with much energy to the crowd which filled the court, he said "that the madness of enthusiasm or religious bigotry had no part in producing these monstrous crimes. There were not here two conflicting parties arrayed under the colours of orange and green; not Protestant against Catholic, nor Catholic against Protestant—no; it was Catholic against Catholic. Why do not their clergy exert their power over these people? We all know that by means of confession they possess much information of what is transacting in the country. Why then do not the priests perform their duty, and deny the rites of the Church to all who participate in such crimes, or who refuse to discover the conspirators? Can a combination extending over four counties be yet a secret to all the Catholic clergy in those counties? They at least see its effects, and it is their bounden duty to investigate the causes of those effects. But if they will remain inactive, surely the bishops should exercise the authority with which the Church has invested them, and stimulate the priests to a discharge of their duty.

"Where was the diabolical scheme planned and matured? In a chapel. Who conducted it? The clerk. Catholics were the agents and perpetrators of the crime—Catholics the miserable sufferers. Why did they suffer? Because the unfortunate Lynch and Rooney had resisted a midnight attack upon their house with manly fortitude, and had afterwards prosecuted to conviction those miscreants who were since hanged for the crime. Yes, their offence was simply that they had appealed to the mild and beneficent laws of their country for redress and protection. It was incumbent on the Catholic clergy of Louth, Monaghan, Cavan, and Meath, to vindicate the sacerdotal character. He knew not whether any of that order was then present, nor did he care, but he was desirous that what he was now saying should be published. It ought to be widely promulgated. He was known to be no party man, and he spoke only from the impulse of an honest indignation. It was his peculiar study to fulfil his duty to the utmost extent of his knowledge and ability. He was always an advocate for the Catholics, and sincerely sought to have their grievances redressed."

His lordship then exhorted the jury to consider the whole business dispassionately and maturely. If they entertained any doubt, the prisoners at the bar were to have the full benefit of that doubt. Such is the beneficial spirit of that law, which the wretched and infatuated people who have perpetrated the crimes in question have sought to destroy.

The jury retired for a short time and found a verdict of guilty.

An indescribable scene ensued. The most dreadful imprecations burst forth from the wretched prisoners. M'Elarney, an old and malignant convict, vented his rage by cursing the counsel who had pleaded against him, and by frequently interrupting the judge in pronouncing the awful sentence of death. "I don't care! I don't care what you do with me!" was the incessant cry of the inhuman miscreant."

The ten murderers were hung at Dundalk on the 9th of March. The ninety other villains who had danced round the funeral pile of the Lynches escaped.

In his charge at Armagh, immediately after these executions, Judge Fletcher gave a history of the bygone persecutions of the Catholics of Armagh by the Orangemen and Break of Day men, who had ruthlessly driven thousands of persons from the country, or, to use their own cruel language, "to hell or Connnaught." These wanton and unprovoked persecutions, unchecked by the magistrates, magnified by designing and traitorous persons, had led to the fatal origination of the Ribbonmen's associations and subsequently to the deplorable rebellion of 'Ninety-eight, with all its attendant atrocities and cruel massacres.

The excellent and wise judge concluded with a few sentences which were as thoughtful as they were true. "No good," he said, "can accrue to you from the persecution of your neighbours who may believe a little more or a little less, who may worship God in a different temple, or with different observances. The law knows no difference, regards no distinction of colour or pretension. For myself, I think it right to say to you, gentlemen, that I regard all these associations as illegal. I care not what the body, whether green or orange, nor what the pretence, nor what the profession—all, I say, are illegal."

It is in crimes like this burning of Wildgoose Lodge that we see the darker side of the fine Irish character, its impetuous courage turned into cruelty, its deep religious feeling into fetish superstition, its pining for liberty into secret and cowardly conspiracy. Can we wonder that such crimes as this and the Scullabogue, Wexford, and Vinegar-hill massacres, forced the English into severity and repression?

IN THE SHADOW.

SITTING in the shadow, singing
Such a sober song,
Sure thou dost the merry season
And the sunshine wrong!
Forth among thy venturesome brethren,
Where great deeds are done;
Only in the wide arena
Is the garland won.
Fame and honours are the guerdon
Of the bold and strong.
Singer, in the shadow singing
Such a serious song,
What if unto thee derision
And neglect belong? *

While thy slow reluctant fingers
On the lute-strings lie,
Eager crowds to crown thy rivals
Pass thee careless by.
And thou sittest, singing, singing,
Through the silence lone,
To the same sad burden ringing
Mournful monotone.
And the busy will not hearken,
Nor the idle heed,
The ambitious do not prize thee,
Nor the happy need.
Come forth to the sunshine, singer,
'Mong the haunts of men,
Tune thy harp to blither measures—
They will hear thee then.
Far above my compeers
Could'st thou lift me now,
Wreathing with their laurels
My triumphant brow,
By my syren singing,
Not a soul unmoved—
In all hearts enthroned me,
Chosen and beloved,
More than Balak proffer'd
To the recreant seer,
All the mighty covet,
And the proud hold dear,
Should not, could not, tempt me,
To a softer strain;
I must sing my song out,
Though I sing in vain.
As the Master guides it,
So the hand must play,
And the words He whispers
Need'st must have their way.
Let the world turn from me
With a mute disdain,
I must speak my message,
Though I speak in vain;
I must sing my song out,
Though I sing in vain.
Let men hurry by me,
As they will to-day;
There will come a morrow
When they need'st must stay,
When they need'st must listen,
Murmur as they may.
Therefore in the shadow
Leave me singing on;
They will surely seek me
At the set of sun,
When life's day is waning,
And her hopes are gone.

DROPPED PROVERBS.

THE play of Hamlet is generally thought to appear to disadvantage, and to endanger the author's fame, on such occasions as where, in consequence of the indisposition of Mr. Hopkins, the Prince of Denmark is, "for this night only," taken out of the bill. Othello, and no Moor, is a spectacle which we should vastly prefer witnessing by proxy. In the Merchant of Venice, we could not well spare the Jew. We recollect a passage or two where the dialogue would run tamely without Shylock. What an apple is to an apple-dumpling, these ingredients are precisely to those dramas—core and

essence. It is to be suspected that the Adventures of Don Quixote de la Mancha would have made rather a sorry figure in literary history if Cervantes had, by some accident, left out the Licentiate and the Windmill; but what if he had not put in Don Quixote? What, if that celebrated scene in Sterne, which has made the person and name of the author familiar to many thousands who buy engravings, but who do not read the Sentimental Journey—the episode in the shop—had dropped out at press? What, if Walpole had fancied he could do without the helmet in his Otranto?

There are some parts of some wholes with which the case stands differently. There are some things which we could bear patiently to see tampered with by a judicious hand. We should never object, on our own part, to dates without stones, to oysters without shells (*cæteris paribus*), or to shrimps without cuticles.

But these are quite the exceptions, we take it. The rule is just the other way. The goose-pie without the goose would never eat so tooth-somely. Duck without stuffing would make an epicure take out his pocket-handkerchief, and forget that he was a man, though the duck might be a duck for all that. Completeness is decidedly a beauty to be aimed at in these cases and in similar ones. The human eye is a little given to the love of perfect things, as well as, be it added, to a dislike of things imperfect in any of their more important elements.

The public is not unreasonably exacting in its requirements from authors, actors, and cooks. But it is always somewhat better pleased and satisfied when the goods supplied are, to borrow the commercial jargon, as per invoice. The public is a pretty good paymaster, and it prefers, if possible, to see its "money's worth."

It is not invariably that the public does.

In milder phrase, these matters do not uniformly realise the expectations which were formed of them.

It was by the purest accident that some proverbs have fallen in our way. The editor of a late Book of Proverbs happened unknowingly to let a large number of them drop on his way to the printer's, and it was our excessive good fortune to pick up the same.

We are aware that treasure-trove may be claimed by somebody or other, perhaps it may be, by Royalty, but in this instance we have no intention of surrendering a fraction. For the satisfaction of the editor, however, we propose to favour him with a glimpse or two of our highly valuable discovery, that he may feel comfortably sure that our two thousand foundlings ought to have gone into the "most complete collection in the language," and were left out only by a very singular fatality.

The Reverend John Ward, vicar of Stratford-on-Avon, when there were old men there who might have seen and known Shakespeare, has left behind him, among other good things, the best definition of a proverb we can find anywhere."

"Six things," says he, "are required to a

proverb. It should be—1. Short; 2. Plain; 3. Common; 4. Figurative; 5. Ancient; 6. True."

What we are going to point out almost directly cannot well fail to exercise a tantalising influence on the editor we have in our eye, and we are sorry that it should be so. We shall not, however, push our advantage beyond moderate limits. We shall exhibit no unbecoming glee. We shall content ourselves with proving that our treasure-trove ought to have gone to the printer's—*his* printer's—with the rest, and that it was his fault that it did not, not ours. *Bis vincit, qui convincit.*

Besides, the bare enumeration of what we have got would occupy about fifty pages, which is forty-five more than there are to spare. We understated rather than overstated, when we mentioned roughly two thousand, and we find ourselves in the position of those persons who are called upon to select from their materials for approbation a few specimens of surpassing choiceness.

The partiality which we have cherished from the commencement of our proprietorship for these waifs is almost of a parental intensity, and has led us on to a feeling that we would scarcely exchange them for all the rest in the editor's richly furnished volume. Proverbs come ordinarily by, straightforwardly by, uprightly by, would not possess the same charm, the same worth.

They have been ours long, and we have been of two minds up to the present moment whether or no we would suffer common eyes even so much as to peep at them. Once passed from our hands, they will be written out, we foresee plainly, on the margins of their copies by men we know not.

We shall proceed, then, to give those who are interested a general and cursory idea of the capital sort of thing this Proverb Dictionary *might have been*, had not the editor had the unhappiness to which we have alluded :

Anglica gens,
Optima fiens,
Pessima ridens.

"Merry England" does not mean, we are told now (rather late in the day!), jolly England, but pleasant, cheerful ditto. It is as much as to say, we are a pleasant cheerful race, not at all fond of grumbling, ready to take things as they come, and clever at making out sermons from stones, with the remainder of the quotation, of course, into the bargain.

But the proverb, what is to become of that, if these are our virtues, or rather but a taste of them?

The proverb is short, plain, common (formerly), figurative, and ancient. In all these points it complies with Mr. Ward's requirements. Shall it be said that it is not true as well?

Not so true, perhaps, as a proverb should be. The reason is obvious. It is not a thorough-bred proverb. It has epigram blood in it. The

author's spleen was a little out of order when he made it, or he would have given us credit for being not such bad laughers when the humour was on. Suppose he was a bilious foreigner, and make allowances for him!

The article we have put at the head of our specimens is the worst we could find. We shall improve very rapidly as we advance.

We have always entertained a stealthy affection for that which in proverbial lore must by need be a sort of heresy, for proverbs which are fantastic, mysterious, not so plain, neither so common. Command us to such as, "Backare quothe Mortimer to his sow?" "Away with it! quothe Washington;" "I trow not, quothe Dinnis;" or "Veal! quothe the Dutchman."

Now, who, for goodness' sake, was Mortimer? He was a sensible man, at any rate, who thought that dog-Latin was good enough for any sow. There is something imperial about Mr. Washington. Who can he have been? He was not President George. We shall not inquire after Dinnis, because we are tired of putting questions and getting no answers. Hap-hazard, we should imagine him an Irish gentleman, who passed through life in a state of universal incredulity; but this is a mere surmise.

The next is altogether choicer:

Best please and serve those,
That best does, and least owes.

The editor was indebted, we believe, for the foregoing proverbial poemet or poetastical proverb to a London tradesman of thirty years' standing, to whom it was a guide, rule, and comfort in his long professional career, now lately closed. The verse may be said to be smooth, harmonious, and impressive; and upon its doctrinal wisdom there cannot be two opinions. We prefer not raising the question of grammar; it is a proof of a confined mind very often, and it has gone a good deal out of fashion.

"Dirty hands make clean money," is an adage to our liking. It is all English. It is industrial. A vision of the black country rises up before us. It is better than the notion of clean hands making dirty money.

"Good meat we may pick from a goose's eye," a learned writer upon the goose, in his work entitled "The Goose," gives us to know. Next to the goose, his eye then, but the goose first.

"He'll go where the devil can't, between the oak and the rind," say the Cornish chaps of "Cousin Jacky," when they see that he knows "How many blue beans go to make five."

"It is as great pity to see a woman weep, as a goose to go barefoot," is in a book of 1526, and was of course part of our treasure-trove. It seems to fulfil all Mr. Ward's conditions. Can it be true, though?

"Money's round: it truckles." Short, plain, figurative, and, by your leave, true.

"Still swine eat all the draf." The quietest porker is the cunningest. He eats while the rest are singing or snoozing,

"The king must wait while his beer's drawing," has a fine touch of morality about it. We make the public a present of its suggestiveness.

The next is long rather than short, occult rather than plain, unique rather than common, personal rather than figurative, ancient probably, true not probably. "This is he that killed the blue spider in Blanchepowder Land!" A proverb intended to perpetuate the dishonour of an Englishman, (?) whose name, unfortunately for the object of the satire, has not come down. It is like the surviving label over some lost work of art. It inspires the same feelings as an empty pillory might.

"To find guilty Gilbert, where he had hid the brush," has a similarly disappointing effect. We want data. An editor ought to take in hand these matters.

To talk well with some women doth as much good
As a sick man to eat up a load of green wood.

The "humour" of which is Nothing. The following is true, ancient, and plain:

When the rain raineth, and the goose winketh,
Little woteth the gosling what the goose thinketh.

Little indeed!

This proverb-literature is a sort of philosophy and lay religion of the common people. Their wise saws the country-folk prize above book-learning. They make their proverbs suit their occasions, and they answer "all the year round."

Every shire has its own. Every season has its share. There might be a whole calendar drawn up, filled with nothing else. They are the speaking picture of the national superstitions, abiding testimonies of usages, sentiments, opinions, and transient events without number, all the more perishable parts in most cases gone. Or they are axioms, simple and pure, without local or temporary colouring, and then time does not stale their newness, nor rob them of their first moral.

He that heweth over high,
The chips will fall in his eye,

will always keep green, and bear applying; and there are thousands of such-like, as good—and better.

The Robin Hood proverbs are not so numerous as might be expected, but, such as they are, our budget has most of them.

"Good even, good Robin Hood!" is as old as Henry the Eighth's time, and was a kind of Shylock's courtesy, a greeting under protest, a civility with a very warm and genuine malediction at the bottom of it. We do not say "Good even, good Robin Hood!" any longer, but we put it differently, as "How d'ye do? (and be hanged to ye)." The thing remains; the form has undergone change.

In our way of thinking, it was better for people to swear, as they did formerly, by Robin Hood and Maid Marian than by whom and what we swear by sometimes. It was giving a

pastoral prettiness, a greenwood flavour, a sort of first of May twang, to a disagreeable usage—making it as palatable as possible.

Lumping weight went once by the name of "Robin Hood's pennyworths," for he was a man, this Robin, who, from the peculiarly advantageous circumstances under which he bought, was enabled to sell at the most reasonable prices.

Every one of us has heard of "Hobson's choice" as a narrow option which, in olden time, a certain Cambridge carrier afforded his customers : "This horse, sir, or none?" But there was also "Robin Hood's choice," to which, Robin Hood having lived first, we are inclined to yield precedence.

Robin's field of selection was not much broader than Master Hobson's; and it was his invariable rule to have the first pick, you coming second, or, if you did not like that—in short, getting Robin Hood's choice, of which the alternative was not unlike the unknown quantity x .

There are loads of what we may call natural-history proverbs among these mislaid gems—fox proverbs, cat and dog proverbs, fish proverbs, &c.

There is the ancient transmitted legend of the Fox and the Grapes, and here is the adage in its earliest shape : The fox, when he cannot reach the grapes, says they are not ripe. It was current in this form in James the First's day.

"At length the fox is brought to the furrier" is a proverbial allegory, of which we are too respectful to the reader to offer the key.

We like foxes, in theory, for such pleasant stories used to be narrated to us of them in our youth, when we were always sorry if the fox got the worst of it, and we confess to liking these vulpine adages. Our friend dropped a good many of them, luckily for us : we can help him to another or so.

"He that hath a fox for his mate, hath need of a net at his girdle."

"A hare is more subtle than a fox, for she makes more doubles than old Reynard."

We are very strong in the natural-history section. From foxes to cats is the gentlest transition we can think of.

"A gloved cat can catch no mice" reads like a truism, but it is, on the contrary, a very sound piece of doctrine, as well as a neat paraphrase of what would be a familiar household experience if it were tried. "A cat's walk, there and back," is as much as to say no walk at all ; but this must be taken with allowance, for cats walk more than fishermen ; theirs, the saying goes, is "three steps and 'overboard.'

There is a valuable proverbial suggestion for travellers, not to be found in Murray : "In every country dogs bite," and there is another aphorism adapted for general circulation : "Cut off a dog's tail, and he'll be a dog still;" or, in other words, "a dog's a dog for a' that."

What has gone before must appear to the graver sort disgracefully puerile, and so what

will be thought of the next? "The dog gnaws the bone—because he cannot swallow it."

"I was taken by a morsel, says the fish," we do not find in the most complete collection in the language ; but ichthyological aphorisms are not plentiful. Fishes are neither of the heavens nor of the earth, but of the water, watery ; out of their own country ; Aquarius is their only friend. To the water most properly belong watery proverbs, drinking proverbs, item, drunken proverbs, as,

"The river past, and God forgotten."

"If you could run as you drink, you could catch a hare."

"A drunkard thinks aright, that the world goes round."

"When the drink goes in, then the wit goes out."

"He drives turkeys to market."

There is every probability that the two which succeed were made by anticipation for a late eminent fruiter in Piccadilly :

"He that burns his house, warms himself once."

"He will burn his house to warm his hands."

In the same way, somebody composed this ensuing maxim, foreseeing its practical application in a remote age to a royal duke lately deceased : "Into a mouth shut, flies fly not."

In Chaucer's time there was some dictum in vogue equivalent to our "Every Jack has his Jill," for he says in one passage :

Noon so gray a goos gotteth in the lake,
—woll be withouten mate.

"Chaque pot a son couverele," the French have it.

Patience is known to be a scarce virtue ; but it may be rather new that "He that hath patience hath fat thrushes for a farthing."

"He goes where the devil can't, between the oak and the rind," and "Between the devil and the deep sea," are fresh diabolical aspects of this literature, fresh to many at least. The first signifies a more than ordinary talent for arithmetic, and the second is a West of England way of describing a gentleman in a difficulty.

We have instanced above several individuals who have attained celebrity of a very special kind through their accidental association with a proverb, like Mortimer, who said to his saw, "Backare, quoth he."

In a single immortal line, Mortimer survives for us ; and the same may be said of Crowder, of Wallace (not Sir William), and of Smoothy :

"As cunning as Crowder."

"Away the mare, quoth Wallace."

"All of one side, like Smoothy's wedding." The pity is, that the name of the person has been irrevocably lost in whom originated the saying recorded by Shakespeare :

"As jealous as the man who searched a hollow walnut for his wife's lover."

Older than Shakespeare is that adage, "Thieves falling out, true men come by their goods." It was probably popular before he was born, and it is the title of a tract printed

almost before he began to write. The Scotch have their own version of it, "Quhen thieves reckon, leal men come to their geir."

When we brought forward that remarkable couplet,

When the rayne rayneth, and the gose wynketh,
Lytyll woty whole goslyng what the gose thynkith,
it did not occur to us that it should not have been allowed to go without a companion we had purposely provided for it, videlicet, "The fat man knoweth not what the lean thinketh."

It is satisfactory to know that at Marlow (a very handy distance)

Is fish for catching,
Corn for swatching,
And wood for fatching.

There is one article which, we are sorry to state, does not fulfil, in our judgment, the most important of the regulations laid down for proverbs, that they shall be true:

If I could hear, and thou could'st see,
Then should none live but you and me,
As the adder said to the blindworm.

—Which happens to be true only of the blindworm, and so the whole fabric collapses.

But we must not outrun our quantity, for we are not "everybody," as some one has put it. So let us conclude with a saying of Roger North's: which, however, might have been a saying of his grandfather's: "He who has been in the oven himself, knows where to find the pastry."

TWELVE MONTHS OF MY LIFE.

IN TWELVE CHAPTERS. CHAPTER VI.

It is needless to set down here how often at this time Mrs. Hatteraick came to see me, how many cream cheeses and sweet shortbreads, how many baskets of strawberries of their own picking, and nice new books just fresh from London, were carried triumphantly into my room by the good Samaritans, Polly and Nell. And invariably with these other gifts came the bouquet, of which Polly was not unreasonably proud as the handiwork of Uncle Mark. "He matched the colours himself," this little woman would cry, "and you should have seen him going picking and snipping round the greenhouses, gardener John following him with tears in his eyes." These flowers used to oppress me in my small room sometimes. They were richer and of stronger perfume than any about the Mill-house. Often during these visits of Mrs. Hatteraick's, when Sylvia had carried off the children, and the old lady and I sat alone, she talked to me sweetly and wistfully about her tall soldier son, of his goodness and bravery, and her desire to see him married to some one who could appreciate him and be worthy of him, some one he and she could love. When should I be able to go back to Eldergowan? was her constant cry.

And as often as she talked to me in this manner, just so often had I right impulses to open my heart to her, and tell her all about

Luke. But physical weakness and suffering had made me a coward, and I still kept putting off the evil day. Each visit was too short and precious to be darkened by the cloud which I felt must come between me and that gentle face whenever my story should be told. I cheated myself with fair promises and the finest reasoning in the world. I said that by-and-by, when I was stronger, and less foolishly nervous and lackadaisical than I found myself now, I should be able, in the telling my news, to speak up with a better dignity, and guard the honour of my father, my future husband, and myself. I felt that I could never confess to Mark's mother that I did not like Luke Elphinstone, and, as I was determined to hold up my head and walk with pride in the way I had to go, I had better have no slipping and hesitating, no goading commiseration and counsels. Advice could not avail me, and sympathy could only sting.

One golden afternoon, I sat alone in my own room at the open window. The grass, the trees, the river, and sky, all were golden. The very rolling monotony of the distant dashing wheels was molten gold poured out in sound upon the air. Idleness and sunshine are sore irritants to a troubled heart. Many disturbing questions had been teasing me all morning with oft-silenced "whys" and "wherefores." The birds and the flowers had been giving me bad advice, and my solitude had obliged me to listen to them.

Elspie came hobbling in with her knitting, and sat down beside me in her privileged way, "speering" at my face, though I kept it turned from her till the sun had dried it. But Elspie's eyes, with the help of a pair of huge wry spectacles, were as keen as any I have met with.

"It's sair to see you sittin' greetin' here for lonesomeness," said Elspie, "when there's aye o'er yon air years i' the house might bide wi' you for company."

"You are very cross, Elspie," I said. "I thought you had given up your ill-will to Miss Ashurst. Do you think I would sit in-doors on such a day as this if I could help it? And it is new to her, you know. You never were in London, Elspie, and how should you understand why she loves to be so much in the open air here?"

"She no' i' the open air the noo," said Elspie, grimly. "She's doon there," pointing with her thumb towards the drawing-room below. "I saw her yonder awhile ago, walkin' aboot the floor, and singin' and talkin' to herself, just daff-like. She's no' sae fond o' the open air unless when she's aye to walk wi' her."

I smiled at Elspie as she tugged her needles.

"I don't think she'll find any one to walk with her here," said I, "except it be the dogs or the crows."

"Oh ay! that indeed!" said Elspie. "Wait till the sun's a bit low, an' she's off to meet Luke, wi' her hat on her arm sae simple, an' her bare locks shining like a wisp o' goud. You

might mind yer auld nursery window, Mattie, an' how far a body might see roun' the orchard out o' its wee crooked panes. Gin ye were sittin' there instead o' here the length o' the simmer's day, ye might see mair than the river runnin'."

"What might I see, Elspie?" I asked, knowing that I must speak and humour her.

"Mair than I'd like to tell ye, lass," said Elspie, peering at me from under her shaggy grey brows; "only I'll say ane word to ye that's worth a score. Get yon smooth-faced hizzie oot the Mill-house the soonest day ye can, gin ye think o' Maister Elphinstone for yer husband."

"Elspie!" I said, sharply, "I never knew before that you were a cruel and unjust woman. I know you have always had a strange dislike to my friend, whom every one else loves, but you ought not to let it carry you too far. If Mr. Luke and Miss Ashenhurst are better friends than they used to be, I am very glad of it, and no more need be said on the subject. Why, you silly old thing," I added, "if you only knew how far you are astray with your ridiculous notions!" And I smiled as I thought of the doctor's blushes.

"Eh lass!" said Elspie, leaning her chin upon her skinny hand, and looking at me mournfully, "yer over young to deal wi' a wicked waird, an' yer over proud an' simple to look after yer ain rights. Gin ye were free an' coaxing wi' yer lover yersel', ye might snap yer fingers at a' the saif-faced strangers on airth, but ye will not even crook yer finger to bring him to yer side. I tell ye, bairn, that a man likes a bonny woman that'll laugh in his eyes, an' blush when he comes by, better than a bonnier woman that's cauld an' sad. An' I tell ye mair, that gin ye do not stir yersel' it's Sylvia an' not Mattie that'll sit at Luke Elphinstone's fireside. Wae's me! did not yer mither pass me wi' a waft o' the gloamin' last night. An' I spoke to her oot loud on the lobby as she went flittin' by. 'Gang hame, maistress,' I said, 'an' tak' yer sleep. Elspie'll speak to the bairnie afore anither day.'"

At this point Sylvia came singing up the stairs, and Elspie hobbled abruptly from my room. The young woman and the old woman exchanged glances of distrust upon the threshold. Sylvia looked saucily after her enemy, and, turning to me, asked me gaily what Goody Crosspatch had been saying to make me look so glum. I told her we had been speaking of my mother. Sylvia sat down beside me and talked sweetly and kindly, as she knew how to talk. I half closed my eyes and ears, and tried to look at her apart from her fascinations, but it was like swimming against a current, and the tide of her good humour bore me with it. It seemed to strike her that I was sad, and she exerted herself to amuse me, which proved to me that her neglect at other times could be owing to no deliberate unkindness. But she soon wearied of her task and left me, and the old state of things went on.

I began to ruminate seriously upon Elspie's suggestions. I had felt so certain that Sylvia was encouraging the doctor, that I had never thought of the possibility of her preferring Luke. How should I, since she and Luke had been almost at enmity when I saw them last together? But they had been much thrown upon each other's society since then, and must have at least become good friends, unless Elspie could be supposed to have gone mad. Reflection made me uneasy for Sylvia, and I resolved that, at all events, she should no longer be kept in ignorance of the engagement between me and Luke Elphinstone.

"My dear," said Miss Pollard, bursting in on me one morning, all rosy and breathless, "I wanted so much to come and see you, so I made a little jelly for an excuse. I got up at four this morning, partly to make it, and partly because I could not sleep. If Miss Ashenhurst is not about, I should like a little private conversation."

I assured her that we should not be disturbed.

"Should Miss Ashenhurst come in," she said, "promise me you will immediately change the conversation. Miss Ashenhurst makes me feel as if I were sitting on pins, or had my gown hooked on crooked, or my shoes on the wrong feet, or something else very uncomfortable the matter with me. If she happens to call at my house when Dr. Strong is paying me a visit, as he often does, on the subject of broth and petticoats, she gives way to such extraordinary merriment that I quite blush, my dear, besides being uneasy lest it should end in hysterics."

I promised that if Sylvia happened to come in, I should immediately begin to talk about canaries. When Miss Pollard said, "I quite blush, my dear," it was literally true, for her cheeks had turned as red as a rose. She put off her bonnet with trembling hands, and the lap-pets of her little cap stirred with great agitation. She had on her best black silk gown, so I knew that a matter of importance was to be discussed.

"It is about Dr. Strong," my dear, she said, speaking with a quaint mixture of elation and distress in her manner, and adding, with a slight incoherency, "though ostensibly it was only about broth and petticoats."

In a moment I guessed what was coming, and in the shock of amazement I felt through my mind for my familiar idea of Dr. Strong as a lover of Sylvia's. But all ideas were in confusion, and I could only listen.

"It is all notes, my dear," said Miss Pollard, "and I put a few in the bottom of my bag, under the jelly, for a sample. I had one from him last year on the subject of beef-tea, but it began, 'My dear Madam,' and ended exactly like a circular, and that, you know, is very different from 'My very dear Miss Pollard,' and 'My dearest Jenny.' I think it is rather free of him," said the little lady, drawing herself up, and making efforts to control her blushes, "considering that I never answered any of his

notes, nor gave him the slightest encouragement, unless it may have been running up-stairs to put on my bonnet when I saw him advancing to my cottage, and making believe I was going to pay a visit, because it is so much easier to talk to him walking down the road than sitting face to face in the parlour, which is such a nervous position."

I read the notes which she gave me. The first was written in polite terms of friendliness, while the last, beginning "My dearest Jenny," was the nearest possible approach to a love-letter. It was very nicely worded, yet eminently calculated to flatter the vanity and touch the heart of the simple little maiden lady to whom it was addressed, especially if her heart were at all inclined to be soft towards the writer.

"That is the one, my dear," said Miss Pollard, her blushes rising to their climax—"that is the one which cost me a sleepless night, and jelly-making at four o'clock this morning. That is the one which resolved me to come and ask your advice, should Miss Ashenhurst not be in the neighbourhood."

Having examined the notes, I could not but give my opinion that they could only mean that Dr. Strong wished to marry Miss Pollard. I had at first suspected a hoax, but it chanced that I had very recently had an opportunity of seeing the doctor's handwriting in a note which he had sent with a nosegay to Sylvia. The evidence, to me, seemed conclusive, and the little spinster testified her joy at my verdict by falling upon my neck and kissing me. Sylvia came in after that, and I thought she must have seen or overheard something, there was such a mischievous laugh in the corner of her eye. But the conversation immediately turned on canaries.

It was shortly after this that I saw one day the unusual apparition of my father coming up the walk from the river quite early in the afternoon. I thought he looked stooped, and flushed with the heat, and my mind misgave me that he was not well. He espied me at my window, and came up to my room.

"All alone, Mattie!" said he, "and looking as woe-begone as if the mills had stopped. What have you done with that scamp, Luke? You are idling him finely these times!"

"You are quite mistaken, papa," I said; "I have not seen Luke more than twice during the past ten days."

"Nonsense!" cried my father, quite agast.

"Indeed," I said, "it is truth."

Then he broke out in wrath against the senseless contradictitiousness of women. "You have kept him doing errands for you through the country," he said; "matching silks, or buying bobbins, I'll be bound. I am not going to scold you," he added, "but it interrupts business badly, lass; it plays the very devil with business. There, there, you've been too long shut up in this oven of a room—infernally hot—would kill me in a week. Where is that fine London madam that was supposed to have broken her

heart—pish!—why does she not give you her arm into the garden to get the air?"

"An arm would not do," I said; "but I am not very heavy. You could carry me to the summer-house, papa."

He chafed and frowned at the audacity of the proposal, but I got my arms about his neck, and we accomplished the journey together. A year before I had hardly ventured to lift my voice in my father's presence, but he was altered, and I was altered, and since then I had learned my value. I remembered that day that I was worth thousands of capital to the mill, and I dared to claim affection and consideration. I had been a good obedient daughter, and I was reaping the reward of my conduct.

"Papa," said I, "if Luke is making holiday on his own account, I do not see why you and I should not have a little feast;" and I sent for some wine and fruit.

"Luke is a good industrious lad," said my father, sipping his wine, "and he has never been given to gadding till lately. The mills are thriving; spinning gold every day. Gordon and Elphinstone will be foremost among the merchant-princes of the country. But it will not do if Luke takes to gadding. I thought he had been dangling after you; but if there is anybody else, it is worse. I tell you what it is, Mattie, you must cut the year short, and get him into harness at once."

Ah me! how I had cheated myself with false faith in my own meekness. Just now I had been enjoying my father's better humour and the new fresh taste of the open air; but at these last words some spirit of evil seemed to leap up in the quiet garden there and wrestle with, and go nigh to choke me. A wicked despair took possession of me, and I dashed my glass with its wine into the bushes near.

"I bargained for a year," said some one who seemed beside me; and then a convulsion caught me, and shook me like a punished child.

"Good God!" cried my father. "Stop, girl! Hush! for mercy's sake. Confound women! Mattie, lass, you shall have your own time, only stop crying, and don't kill yourself. Do what you please, only cure Luke of his gadding. And, by-the-by, I ought to be back at the mills. There, child, good-bye; and I'll send Elspie to give you another glass of wine."

And my father actually ran away, scared by my frantic passion. Things were strangely altered when I could frighten him, whom all my life I had feared. After he had gone, I wept more quietly to see how he was broken down in mind as well as body. Dependence on Luke Elphinstone, dependence on a child's obedience, had left its wearing mark upon his proud spirit. The stern reticent man was falling into a timorous and choleric old age.

I think I have told before how the old garden was built high on little walls, how the twig summer-house stood at the lower end with the burn running behind it, and how the lilac-trees that lined the summer-house hung over the shady path beside the burn. I know not any-

where a sweeter, stiller, dreaming place than that pathway behind the garden, and there were little breaks in the lilac-trees, through which I had often, when a child, thrust my face to see the sun dancing in the thickets, and the sticklebacks leaping in the stream.

On this day after my father had left me, I was sitting very quiet in the summer-house, having finished my tears, when I heard steps in the lane below the lilacs, and voices coming murmuring from behind me. At first I did not heed it, for the lane led to meadows and pasture lands, and was frequented by milkmaids and haymakers. I forgot that it was not milking time, and that the haymaking was over. For full half an hour the murmur of the voices went on behind me, while I sat motionless with my face between my hands, too weary and too drowsy with weakness and trouble to think of putting my eyes to the opening in the lilacs to learn who were the gossips in the lane. At last the tone of a half-raised voice came familiarly to my ear, making me start, while a tingling sensation gave new life to every vein in my body.

I looked through the trees and saw Sylvie and Luke Elphinstone sitting side by side on the grass between the pathway and the burn. Sylvia's hand was lying in Luke's clasp, her bright head was bent, her face in shadow, but the light was full upon Luke Elphinstone. Never had I seen him look so well. There was a flushed, softened, generous look upon his face which was not familiar to it. But it was Sylvia who was speaking, softly and eagerly, her voice at times almost lost in the murmur of the burn.

I do not know one word they said. I drew my shawl over my ears so that I could not hear, and laid my head down on the seat, so that I could neither see nor be seen. The murmuring went on a long time after that, and then it ceased. I lay thinking in the summer-house all the long sunny afternoon. I guessed that at dinner-time my father, who had doubtless forgotten to tell Elspie where to find me, would hear questions concerning me, and would send Luke to carry me into the house. I could have managed to attract notice and get home to my room sooner, but I chose rather to wait for Luke Elphinstone where I was. This were a good quiet place to hold a painful talk.

And in the mean time I could ponder on what I should say to him when he appeared. Many strange thoughts passed through my mind while the sunset hours buzzed past, seemingly on the wings of the bees. I was mad enough to give way to joy, thinking that Fate and the fickleness of a lover were about to undo for me what Fate and the selfishness of a father had so cruelly done. I imagined that to-morrow I might file the stubborn diamond ring from my finger, and return it broken into the hands of the giver. And then, "Oh Eldergowan!" I cried aloud in the silent garden, lifting my head to see the red sun dropping behind the brown distant woods. A blackbird began to pipe in the lilacs beside me; and Luke came down the garden, seeking me.

CHAPTER VII.

LUKE came down the garden with a rod in his hand, switching the heads off the roses as he passed. I could see him better than he could see me, for the sun was in his eyes, and I gave myself new license observing him. I looked at him straight with the downright eyes of my own prejudice, feeling it no longer necessary to varnish him with any lying gloss.

He lifted his hat from his head a moment and shook back his hair. His face looked flushed and troubled. I rejoiced to see him suffering a little wholesome compunction, and thought with some bitterness of the cruel persistence with which he had held me to his will, to be released now at his pleasure. For I could not doubt but that he was eager to dissolve our engagement.

He gave me a furtive glance as he entered the summer-house, and smiled nervously.

"So, Mattie," he said, sitting down beside me, and assuming an offhand manner which sat upon him uneasily, "so you have stolen a march on us to-day. It was hardly fair. Your father says he left you here quite early. You must have been sitting alone the whole of the afternoon?"

"Yes, Luke," said I, "I have been sitting here alone the whole of the afternoon."

Again he looked at me with a furtive questioning glance. I saw that he was uncertain as to whether I had overheard his conversation with Sylvia or not, but I felt too much distaste for this interview to think of prolonging it by keeping him in suspense. I kept my eyes on his face while I spoke; but he persisted in watching his little rod, with which he flicked at the gravel like a nervous schoolboy.

"I heard people talking in the lane," said I, "and I looked through the trees for one moment. After that I rolled my head up in this shawl. It is pretty thick, and you will believe I heard nothing that the people said. You do believe that?"

"Why yes," he said, looking somewhat relieved, though he did not lift his eyes. "I never knew you to say what was not the truth to a titill. But most women would have listened. You are a rare girl, Mattie. You might make anything you liked of a fellow, if you were only a little softer."

There was a dash of regret in his voice as he said this which touched me, and indeed I was in the humour to forgive him. "Well, never mind that now, Luke," I said, stooping kindly to him from my imaginary pedestal. "I know well that Sylvia will suit you much better than I ever could. She has just the softness that I lack. She is a lovely sweet woman, and will make sunshine for you where I should only make gloom. I think it is quite natural that you should change your mind, having seen so much of her lately. I am not at all hurt, and I think it is perhaps better that I happened to come here to-day, as it has saved you the awk-

wardness of seeking this interview of yourself. But you will speak to my father soon : he will take it better from you than from me."

Luke heard me quietly to the end of this long speech, but curious changes of expression passed over his face whilst he broke his little rod bit by bit to pieces in his hands. He threw them all from him at last, lifted his head, and looked at me straight.

"I do not understand you," he said. "You seem to have got the idea that I wish to break my engagement with you and marry Miss Ashurst?"

"Yes," I said, "certainly. I believe that you cannot have any other intention. What would you wish me to think?"

"Anything you please," he said, carelessly, "except that I have no more idea of breaking my engagement than I have of deserting the Streamstown Mills, which are thriving nobly. I will give up neither for any new speculation."

I felt my heart getting sick.

"Your conduct to Sylvia—" I began.

"What has it been?" he interrupted, hastily. "I meet her in the fields of a summer's day, I walk down the lane with her, and sit on the grass, talking to her about old times—about Dick—" He went on feeling his way with his words, and giving rapid glances from the ground to me, to see how his story told upon my face. "Well, I flirt with her a little," he added, seeing, I suppose, disbelief gathering in my eyes, "the day being fine, and the lady being pretty, and you being, as I believe, removed from my reach. Is this a crime past forgiveness?"

"But Sylvia—" I began again, and then stopped short. I could not speak out more plainly, without compromising my friend. I could not drag forth the gossip of servants, nor make it appear that I had acted the spy. I knew in my heart that Luke was false, but I also felt how weak was my case against him. And I saw that with his sidelong glances he read my thoughts, and took ready advantage of my difficulty.

"You need not be uneasy for the lady," he said, with a slightly sneering laugh. "It is not her first essay in flirting, as she will tell you, I dare say, if you ask her. She and I have passed a summer afternoon foolishly, I own, and you are jealous, and that is all about it. If you talk more on the subject, I shall feel inclined to ask an explanation concerning that fine soldier who comes riding here with anxious inquiries so early in the mornings. Ah! have I touched you there, my most high and mighty Mattie? We are quits, I think!"

And he coolly lifted a handful of dry gravel from between his feet, and began pelting the full-blown roses outside, till the leaves fell in showers over the bed.

The blood rushed to my face, and a pain shot through my head. It was true, and yet it was false; for had I not struggled, had I not suffered? Yet the random blow hit sorely home.

"I will not be dragged down to your level!" I cried, passionately. "You have bought my promise, and you may refuse to release me, but you shall not insult me!" Something like this I said.

Luke stared. It was a little raving outburst which he seemed to think ridiculous. Perhaps it sounded so, for he smiled and threw all the pebbles from his hand.

"At all events, Mattie," he said, "I must say that candour is one of your virtues. You never let me forget the terms on which you entered on our engagement. But come now, let us be friends," said he, drawing near, and trying to put his arm round me; "forgive and forget, and let me carry you into the house. Your father will be waiting dinner."

I shrank from him. "Go away to your dinner," I said, "and leave me alone here for another little while." And I drew my shawl round my shoulders again, and laid my head down upon the bench. Luke stood gazing at me for some moments in sullen anger, then turned on his heel muttering something like a curse, and strode out of the summer-house.

Where would be the use of setting down all the little details of what I thought and felt in the minutes that ensued? Half an hour does quite as much mischief as a whole week of unreasonable hope. I was very tired and heated, and I thrust my shoulders through the cool bowery leaves of the trees, and lay with my head on a pillow of lilac-blossoms, looking up at the sky and down at the stream. I believe I fell into a doze, from which I was roused presently by the jangling of the iron gates, and a voice saying, "Why, Mattie!" as if calling over the hills from Eldergowan.

I started up and saw Major Hatteraick coming quickly towards me. I was in time to see the flush of delighted surprise still beaming on his face, and I began to tremble. Here was too much joy coming, and I could not run away. I felt confused by the unexpected nearness of danger, as if a pistol had suddenly been presented at my head.

But it was only for a moment. I could not save myself from the delight of this meeting. There were little niches for feet in the wall, made by the boys who stole the raspberries, and Mark was quickly by my side, grasping both my hands, and searching my face with all his great loving blue eyes.

"Could they not afford you a bed or a sofa in the house," he said, "that you must lie sleeping about the garden-walls like a kitten?"

I said, "I am like a parcel now, you know, and I got left here by accident. You can make yourself very useful if you will give me your arm and get me back to the house."

"Wait awhile, Mattie," he said, softly; "it is pleasant here. Can you not sit beside me a little and talk. In the house I should not have you all to myself." And he drew my crutch gently away from me, and laid it across his knees.

So I sat there a prisoner, reckless and happy.

I felt that no one in the world loved me so wholly and kindly as this big brave man sitting beside me, and I could not but be glad, though my whole life might weep for it afterwards. Have I not said well that I was very far from wise? He told me about Eldergowan, and how it missed me. The house was dull, and the inmates moped; the fields seemed deserted, the gardens lonely. Polly had said that the taste of Mattie was gone from everything, and nothing had any relish. Does it not seem laughable to relate? But it made my heart ache to bursting.

"We want you," he said, "we want you badly. You had no right to come to Eldergowan creating such a need unless you intended to return."

I tried not to mind the tones of his voice. "That is all very well," I said, gaily, "and I am very much obliged to Eldergowan for missing me so much; but I want my crutch at present; I want it badly. And when you see me hobbling along the walk, you will perceive that Eldergowan must rest content without me."

Still he withheld the crutch. "Wait awhile, Mattie," he said again; "I am in no hurry to see you hobbling down the walk. We used to sit together in the gardens over yonder by the hour, and it is inhospitable of you now to deny me the only thing I coveted in coming to your house—a little of your company alone. Do not let me feel that you are altered in anything besides the wearing of that fresh pretty gown that makes you look as if you were dressed in snowdrops. Say you are not changed, Mattie."

"I am not changed" I began; and then started up, crying wildly, I think, "give me my crutch; give it to me at once, and take me home."

He rose on the instant, looking hurt and surprised, placed my crutch without a word, gave me his arm, and we went home to the house together. When we drew near the door, I said:

"My pains have made me very cross; please forgive me my rudeness."

"I could forgive you more than that," he said; and we went in, and found my father still in the dining-room, and alone.

My father had some awe of, and much respect for, Mrs. Hatteraick, and it pleased him to be friendly to her son. He marshalled Major Hatteraick into the drawing-room—a room which he himself rarely entered. Miss Pollard and Sylvia were there, and the tea-things were spread upon the table. Sylvia was cutting cakes for the tea, and Miss Pollard was tugging so fiercely at her worsted-work, that I was sure the poor little lady had been lately made to feel as if her gown were hooked on crooked, or she had her shoes on the wrong feet. Luke came in presently, but sat sullen and silent all tea-time, and directly it was finished disappeared. My father talked of the wars in

courtesy to Major Hatteraick, and Major Hatteraick talked of the mills in courtesy to my father, who was evidently well pleased with his new friend.

After tea, Mark announced the object of his visit.

"I am my mother's ambassador, sir," he said, giving my father a note. There was also one for me, and another for Sylvia. They were all to the same purpose. Mrs. Hatteraick wanted Sylvia and me to come to Eldergowan. Sylvia flushed up and looked grave. She did not want to go.

"They may do as they like," said my father, who was pleased with Mrs. Hatteraick's letter. Mark looked eagerly towards me.

I shook my head. "You had better let me limp about the Mill-house a little longer, papa," said I. "I am not just in order for paying visits."

"I do not suppose Mrs. Hatteraick will expect you to walk the whole way," said my father, sharply. And you may as well limp about Eldergowan as the Mill-house." He was in eminent good humour with the Hatteraicks at the moment, and I saw that he was bent on our going.

Mark's face had clouded over. "My mother will, of course, bring the carriage for you," he said.

"Well, well," said my father, getting impatient, "let them talk the matter over, and make up their minds. Only no nonsense about limping, Mattie. There is no reason in the world against your accepting the kindness of your friends."

And saying this, he marched off with Major Hatteraick to inspect some new machinery at the mills, and we three women were left looking at each other.

"Mattie, my dear," said Miss Pollard, "I should not have believed that a few hours in the open air could make such a change in any person. I never saw wild hair and a tumbled gown so becoming in my life. You are shining and blooming, like a new-blown rose."

"It is my new muslin gown, Miss Pollard," I said, hastily.

Sylvia, who had been very demure all evening, nodded her head sagely.

"It's my mind, Mattie," said she, "that if you go to Eldergowan you will look like that every day you are there. But if you go at present you must go alone. I do not know the people, and I had rather stay at the Mill-house."

"I am not going to Eldergowan, Sylvia," I said. And then a servant came into the room with a letter.

MR. CHARLES DICKENS'S READINGS.

MR. CHARLES DICKENS will read at Blackburn on Friday the 26th; at St. James's Hall, London, on Monday the 29th; at Stoke on Tuesday the 30th; at Hanley on Wednesday the 1st of May; and at Warrington on Thursday the 2nd.

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LIGHT-BROWN COD LIVER OIL.

THE distinctive characteristics which have gained for DR. DE JONGH'S OIL so much celebrity, the entire confidence of the most eminent members of the Medical Profession, and an unprecedented amount of public patronage, may be thus concisely enumerated:—

- I.—Its genuineness, purity, and uniform strength are ascertained and guaranteed.
- II.—It contains all the active and essential principles that therapeutic experience has found to be the most effective in the operation of the remedy.
- III.—It is palatable, easily taken, and creates no nausea.
- IV.—It is borne with facility by the most delicate stomach, and improves the functions of digestion and assimilation.
- V.—Its medicinal properties and remedial action have been found to be immeasurably greater than those of any other kind of Cod Liver Oil.
- VI.—From the unequalled rapidity of its curative effects, it is infinitely more economical than any which is offered, even at the lowest price.

CONSUMPTION AND DISEASES OF THE CHEST.

The extraordinary virtues of DR. DE JONGH'S LIGHT-BROWN COD LIVER OIL in Pulmonary Consumption may now be considered as fully established. No remedy so rapidly restores the exhausted strength, improves the nutritive functions, stops or diminishes emaciation, checks the perspiration, quiets the cough and expectoration, or produces a more marked and favourable influence on the local malady.

The following high testimony to the efficacy of DR. DE JONGH'S Cod Liver Oil in Diseases of the Chest, is afforded by DR. WAUDBY, late Physician to the Hereford Infirmary, from his own personal experience:—

"I can take DR. DE JONGH'S Oil without difficulty or dislike, and with as little inconvenience as water alone. Not only in my own case, but in many others I have seen, it has caused an improvement of chest symptoms, and an increase of weight so soon and so lastingly, as to be quite remarkable. I believe DR. DE JONGH'S Oil to be the most valuable remedy we possess for chronic and constitutional disease."

GENERAL DEBILITY AND EMACIATION.

In cases of prostration and emaciation, where the vital forces are reduced, and where life appears to be even at its lowest ebb, the restorative powers of DR. DE JONGH'S LIGHT-BROWN COD LIVER OIL are remarkably manifested. By its administration the natural appetite is revived, and the functions of digestion and assimilation are improved, reanimated, and regulated; and, when its use has been steadily persevered in, its peculiar tonic and nutritive properties have entirely restored health and strength to the most feeble and deteriorated constitutions.

The actual benefit derived is thus described by BENJAMIN CLARKE, Esq., M.R.C.S., F.L.S., author of "Notes and Suggestions on Cod Liver Oil and its Uses":—

"Having myself taken both the Pale and Light-Brown Cod Liver Oil for debility, I am able, from my own experience, to remark upon their effects and comparative usefulness as remedial agents. After the Pale Oil, and all other remedies that I could think of had failed, I tried, merely as a last resort, DR. DE JONGH'S Light-Brown Oil. I received immediate relief; and its use was the means of my restoration to health. In their sensible properties and chemical constituents the Pale Oil and DR. DE JONGH'S Light-Brown Oil are distinct medicines; and, from my observation of their mode of action and effects, I must believe that I have seen many patients die both in hospital and private practice, some of them of juvenile years, and others in the prime of life, who in all probability would have been cured if the medical properties of DR. DE JONGH'S Light-

EFFICACY OF DR. DE JONGH'S OIL IN THE TREATMENT OF THE DISORDERS OF INFANCY AND CHILDHOOD.

In those severe disorders, *Infantile Wasting and Rickets*, from which children suffer so extensively, and which destroy so many infants, the good effects of this Oil are incontestably established, its operation being oftentimes so very remarkable as to cure the disease when every other remedy had failed, and all hope of saving life had been abandoned.

In cases of languid and imperfect nutrition often observed in children, where the appetite is capricious, and digestion slow and painful, and the body becomes weak and wasted, without any apparent disease, this Oil, after a few weeks, and sometimes in a few days, has produced the most extraordinary transition to a state of normal health. This effect is described by THOMAS HUNT, Esq., F.R.C.S., Medical Officer of Health to the populous district of Bloomsbury, in a communication to the *Medical Times and Gazette* :—

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From innumerable medical and scientific opinions of the highest character in commendation of DR. DE JONGH'S LIGHT-BROWN COD LIVER OIL, the following are selected:—

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Physician in Ordinary to the Queen in Ireland.

"I consider Dr. DE JONGH's Light-Brown Cod Liver Oil to be a very pure Oil, not likely to create disgust, and a therapeutic agent of great value."

Dr. JONATHAN PEREIRA, F.R.S.,
Late Physician to the London Hospital.

"It was fitting that the author of the best analysis and investigations into the properties of this Oil should himself be the purveyor of this important medicine. Whether considered with reference to its colour, flavour, or chemical properties, I am satisfied that for medicinal purposes no finer Oil can be procured."

Dr. LETHEBY,
Medical Officer of Health, and Chief Analyst to the City of London.

"In all cases I have found DR. DE JONGH's Light-Brown Cod Liver Oil possessing the same set of properties, among which the presence of cholic acid, and of iodine in a state of organic combination, are the most remarkable. It is, I believe, universally acknowledged that this Oil has great therapeutic power; and from my investigations, I have no doubt of its being a pure and unadulterated article."

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Senior Physician to Guy's Hospital.

"I have frequently recommended persons consulting me to make use of DR. DE JONGH's Cod Liver Oil. I have been well satisfied with its effects, and believe it to be a very pure Oil, well fitted for those cases in which the use of that substance is indicated."

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[SEE SPECIMEN PAGE ON THE OTHER SIDE.]

"A glass of water!" said the passionate Wardle. "Bring a bucket, and throw it all over her; it'll do her good, and she richly deserves it."

"Ugh, you brute!" ejaculated the kind-hearted landlady. "Poor dear." And with sundry ejaculations, of "Come now, there's a dear—drink a little of this—it'll do you good—don't give way so—there's a love," &c., &c., the landlady, assisted by a chamber-maid, proceeded to vinegar the forehead, beat the hands, titillate the nose, and unlace the stays of the spinster aunt, and to administer such other restoratives as are usually applied by compassionate females to ladies who are endeavouring to ferment themselves into hysterics.

"Coach is ready, sir," said Sam, appearing at the door.

"Come along," cried Wardle. "I'll carry her down stairs."

At this proposition, the hysterics came on with redoubled violence.

The landlady was about to enter a very violent protest against this proceeding, and had already given vent to an indignant inquiry whether Mr. Wardle considered himself a lord of the creation, when Mr. Jingle interposed—

"Boots," said he, "get me an officer."

"Stay, stay," said little Mr. Perker. "Consider, sir, consider."

"I'll not consider," replied Jingle. "She's her own mistress—see who dares to take her away—unless she wishes it."

"I won't be taken away," murmured the spinster aunt. "I don't wish it." (Here there was a frightful relapse.)

"My dear sir," said the little man, in a low tone, taking Mr. Wardle and Mr. Pickwick apart: "My dear sir, we're in a very awkward situation. It's a distressing case—very; I never knew one more so; but really, my dear sir, really we have no power to control this lady's actions. I warned you before we came, my dear sir, that there was nothing to look to but a compromise."

There was a short pause.

"What kind of compromise would you recommend?" inquired Mr. Pickwick.

"Why, my dear sir, our friend's in an unpleasant position—very much so. We must be content to suffer some pecuniary loss."

"I'll suffer any, rather than submit to this disgrace, and let her, fool as she is, be made miserable for life," said Wardle.

"I rather think it can be done," said the bustling little man. "Mr. Jingle, will you step with us into the next room for a moment?"

Mr. Jingle assented, and the quartette walked into an empty apartment.

"Now, sir," said the little man, as he carefully closed the door, "is there no way of accommodating this matter—step this way, sir, for a moment—into this window, sir, where we can be alone—there, sir, there, pray sit down, sir. Now, my dear sir, between you and I, we know very well, my dear sir, that you have run off with this lady for the sake of her money. Don't frown, sir, don't frown; I say, between you and I, we know it. We are both men of the world, and we know very well that our friends here, are not—eh?"

Mr. Jingle's face gradually relaxed; and something distantly resembling a wink quivered for an instant in his left eye.

"Very good, very good," said the little man, observing the impression he had made. "Now the fact is, that beyond a few hundreds, the lady has little or nothing till the death of her mother—fine old lady, my dear sir."

"Old," said Mr. Jingle, briefly but emphatically.

"Why, yes," said the attorney with a slight cough. "You are right, my dear sir, she is *rather* old. She comes of an old family though, my dear sir; old in every sense of the word. The founder of that family came into Kent, when Julius Caesar invaded Britain;—only one member of it, since, who hasn't lived to eighty-five, and *he* was beheaded by one of the Henrys. The old lady is not

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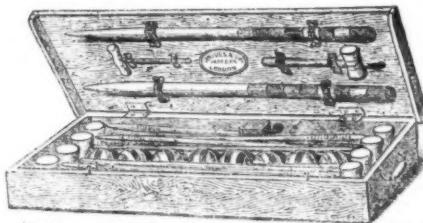
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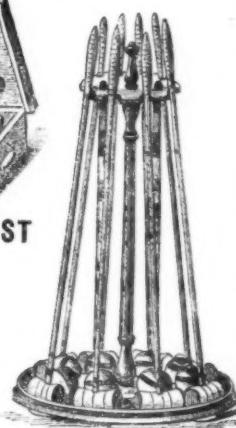
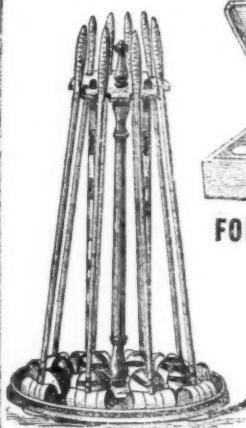


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